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ABSTRACT

Prepared to assist administrators and other developers of curriculum at district and building levels, this syllabus outlines general criteria for an effective integrated curriculum in English language arts, suggests the instructional objectives that need to be addressed, and provides direction for the evaluation of student progress and program effectiveness. The syllabus is in eight sections: (1) Introduction; (2) Program Planning at the Local Level; (3) Characteristics of an Effective English Language Arts Curriculum K-12; (4) Strands in the Communication Process; (5) Providing a Strong Foundation for Literacy; (6) Listening and Speaking in the Language Arts Curriculum; (7) Composition in the English Language Arts Curriculum; and (8) Reading and Literature in the English Language Arts Curriculum. Each of the last three sections directs attention to the purposes, objectives, and focus skills of that particular aspect of communication, all of which support the development of interactive, interdependent, and mutually reinforcing processes that are necessary to understand and express meaning. An 57-item bibliography and six appendixes containing guidelines for keyboarding instruction, information regarding students with handicapping conditions, and other materials conclude the syllabus. (SR)

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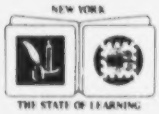

The University of the State of New York
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ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS SYLLABUS K-12

A Publication for Curriculum Developers

The University of the State of New York
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Bureau of English and Reading Education
Bureau of Curriculum Development
Albany, New York 12234
1988

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FOREWORD

The New York State *English Language Arts Syllabus K-12* has been prepared to assist administrators and other developers of curriculum at district and building levels. It outlines general criteria for an effective integrated curriculum in English language arts, suggests the instructional objectives that need to be addressed, and provides direction for the evaluation of student progress and program effectiveness. Each section examines different aspects of communication; each directs attention to the purposes, objectives, and focus skills of that particular aspect of communication, all of which support the development of interactive, interdependent, and mutually reinforcing processes that are necessary to understand and express meaning.

The syllabus supports the Board of Regents Goals for Elementary and Secondary Education—the skills and characteristics each student is expected to acquire through education. Appendix A shows where the various strands within the K-12 English language arts curriculum address specific Regents goals. Appendix B shows the relationship of the Regents goals to the overarching objectives of the English language arts curriculum. Appendix C contains general guidelines for providing keyboarding instruction within the elementary language arts program, as recommended in the Board of Regents Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results in New York. A manual to assist school staff with integrating keyboarding skills in the elementary language arts program is also available. Appendix E provides information regarding students with handicapping conditions, in keeping with the Board of Regents commitment to integrating the education of those students into the total school program.

Three manuals supplement the syllabus: *Listening and Speaking in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*, *Composition in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*, and *Reading and Literature in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*. Each manual contains all of the material from the syllabus that pertains to that strand, plus additional information designed to help classroom teachers plan day-to-day instruction. Together, the syllabus and manuals provide a sound basis for developing an effective English language arts curriculum.

The syllabus was prepared under the direction of Charles Chew, Chief, Bureau of English and Reading Education; Jacqueline Marino and Phyllis Ross, Associates, Bureau of English and Reading Education; and Carol Anne Stiglmeier, Associate, Bureau of Curriculum Development. James Denney, Principal, School #12, Troy City School District, Troy, New York, formerly an Associate with the Bureau of English

and Reading Education, and Joan Milowe, Associate, Bureau of Curriculum Development, served as project coordinators during the initial stages of development. The draft manuscript was reviewed by a team of six educators from throughout the State. It was revised and edited by the State Education Department staff directing the project, and by Edith Leet, consultant to the State Education Department. Final reviews were conducted by the State Education Department's Office for Education of Children with Handicapping Conditions, Office of Nonpublic School Services, and Office of Civil Rights and Intercultural Relations.

This syllabus is a result of the review of language arts materials available from the State Education Department, the current research in language arts education, and the Regents Action Plan mandate that State syllabi be developed for each subject area. This document would not have been possible without the cooperation of the District Superintendents and their Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) throughout the State whose representatives participated in the initial review and revision of the language arts materials for listening and speaking, composition, and reading and literature. Many New York State educators and their affiliations contributed to the development and review of language arts materials which led to the creation of this document. Their names and affiliations are listed on pages vii and viii.

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INTRODUCTION: AN INTEGRATED CURRICULUM IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

"If language is learned best and easiest when it is whole and in natural context, then integration is a key principle for language development and learning through language."

Kenneth Goodman

The ability to use language effectively is appropriately described as an art. As a painter uses colors and shapes, and a sculptor uses materials and forms, so the writer and speaker use words and structures to create images for the reader or listener. Through language, people share stories, traditions, and values; they inform, describe, and explain; they modify their behavior or the behavior of others; they provide and experience pleasure.

Students skilled in using the English language arts of listening, speaking, reading, and writing will be better able to confront, assimilate, and communicate experience. To help students use language effectively and appreciate fully the oral and written expression of others, a well-designed English language arts program ensures that students will learn to use language to:

- gain information, discover meaning, understand logical relationships, and make judgments through critical listening, reading, and viewing
- speak, write, and solve problems creatively
- communicate emotions, ideas, opinions, values, experiences, and information
- discover both the power and the beauty of literature as a mirror of human experience, reflecting human motives, conflicts, values, and traditions.

The New York State English language arts curriculum recognizes the importance of basic skills and competencies and places them within an integrated program that recognizes and capitalizes on the connections among the language arts. Communication is itself an integrated act involving a variety of skills simultaneously performed. Viewing a work of art, watching a performance, evaluating media communications, and reading a work of literature all involve a variety of complex and interrelated language skills. Instruction in reading, writing, listening, and speaking can be both more efficient and more effective if their related qualities and characteristics are emphasized.

An integrated curriculum is essential if schools are to meet the above goals and help students become proficient at communicating in English. An integrated curriculum is appropriate because it acknowledges the inseparable relationship between the language arts and communication. It is efficient because it links content to the language and thinking skills used in learning that content. It is effective because it

discourages instruction that isolates and fragments language skills in artificial, easily measured teaching sequences that ignore, or even contradict, the way students actually learn.

An integrated curriculum in the English language arts is one in which:

- reading, writing, listening, and speaking are taught within a "literate environment" in contexts that are meaningful to the students
- reading, writing, listening, and speaking are considered language processes that interact in various ways to allow communication to occur
- language study happens naturally as part of helping students become clear, precise, effective communicators
- formal evaluation of subskill mastery is de-emphasized in favor of methods that allow for observation of students actively engaged in the communication process.

The following sections expand on these components of an integrated curriculum and provide direction for the development of curriculum at local levels.

A Literate Environment

"By literate environment I mean a place where people read, write, and talk about reading and writing; where everybody can be student and teacher; where everybody can come inside written language."

Nancie Atwell

Dynamic communication flourishes in an environment where language is used in a variety of meaningful experiences and activities. Students read and write every day, and they talk about the books they are reading and the pieces they are writing. They share their knowledge, strategies, and reactions with partners and group members. They have a curiosity about language, and they enjoy using language effectively and imaginatively. Their work is valued, and they have a role in the evaluation process.

In a literate environment, teachers serve as role models, reading aloud from favorite books, sharing drafts of their writing and eliciting comments, and modeling appropriate listening and speaking skills. Their awareness of individual needs and developmental stages is reflected in verbal feedback and assigned activities.

In a literate environment, workbooks are used sparingly, and basal readers and anthologies are supplemented by nonfiction, contemporary and traditional literature, newspapers, periodicals, and nonprint media. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are used as vehicles for learning, both in the English language arts and in the content subjects.

Administrators can ensure that reading, writing, listening, and speaking are natural and integral components of the curriculum by emphasizing to parents and teachers the importance of a literate environment as early as nursery and kindergarten. (See "Providing a Strong Foundation for Literacy," pp. 19-21) Administrators can also help by providing opportunities for staff development, allowing flexibility in

classroom organization and management, assuring that appropriate books, supplies, and resource materials are readily accessible, and personally demonstrating the importance of effective communication skills.

The Language Arts as Processes

Any participation in communication is an involvement with process. For the reader, writer, listener, or speaker, the process involves preparation (pre-action), engagement (action), and response (reaction). Skillful readers plan, monitor, respond to, reflect on, and apply their reading. Effective writers plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish their writing. Skillful listeners focus on, attend to, and react to a message. Effective speakers prepare, present, and revise their message in response to feedback. Although these various phases are recursive and overlapping, each one needs attention. Within each phase of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, specific skills are needed for that process to function effectively.

Teachers who work from a process perspective are aware of the importance of metacognitive skills. Metacognition, or "knowing about knowing," is the ability to recognize and develop control over how one learns. Instruction that capitalizes on and assists the ways learners acquire, understand, convey, and remember information and ideas is important for all students. Such instruction can help those with handicapping conditions become aware of their abilities as well as their need for instructional modifications. When all students share and question their own learning strategies, the roles of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in the learning process quickly become apparent.

"A process-oriented curriculum calls for teachers who invite students to explore and expand their. . .linguistic powers in an atmosphere that is natural and fulfilling; the students. . .come to think of themselves as joyful receivers and producers of stories, plays, songs, poems—all forms of worthy and useful language."

Dorothy Watson

In a process curriculum, language arts instruction focuses on the creation and comprehension of meaning for a variety of purposes and audiences. Skills taught in the context of enhancing or clarifying meaning suggest an optimum time for instruction or reinforcement. Thus, taking and giving messages is related to listening and speaking for social interaction; arranging information in chronological order is related to the purpose of narrating events; distinguishing between fact and opinion is related to the purpose of reading for critical analysis and evaluation. This document is organized around the purposes for listening and speaking, reading, and writing to reinforce the idea that the English language arts have meaning and utility beyond the classroom.

Language as a Medium of Communication

Communication is the fundamental reason for the existence of language. Thoughts and feelings seek expression to self or others. Language, whether spoken or achieved through alternative methods such as signing, is the vehicle through which that expression can occur and by which it can be understood.

Language enables an individual to express thought, and by expressing it in more precise language, to refine and clarify the thought. Clear thinking and precise language are inextricable. In an integrated

English language arts curriculum, opportunities abound for thinking and language to stimulate and sustain each other. Such opportunities should help students to develop:

- a sense of excitement and respect for the power and beauty of language
- a positive and inquiring attitude toward language
- confidence and freedom in using language effectively and imaginatively
- ability to manipulate language according to purpose and audience
- a sense of responsibility in using language, and
- facility in examining and understanding language.

"Language arts or English should be a kind of intellectual 'homeroom,' where a student can see the totality of his symbolic life. . . .language arts must be not only the guardian of literature but the patron of general communication processes."

James Moffett

For language to be treated as a medium of communication, its instruction must not be consigned solely to the language arts curriculum but should be taught in and through the other subject areas as well.

As students compose both to communicate and to learn, they may need to select specific or colorful language. They may use metaphors, similes, personification, assonance, and alliteration long before they learn these labels. Understanding connotation and denotation will help them make word choices, as will the ability to draw upon synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms. Comprehension of subject content is enhanced when students become aware of how language is used to persuade in propaganda, political speeches, and advertisements; to organize data or explain concepts in science; to present problems to be solved in mathematics; or to perpetuate stereotyping and prejudice. Studying the meanings and origins of prefixes, suffixes, and roots of words found in literature and other texts not only provides students with a skill for comprehension but also aids spelling and fosters an understanding of language history. This type of language instruction can take place naturally and sensibly as part of ongoing development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills and is essential to comprehension and appreciation of literature.

When language is taught as a medium of communication, it becomes natural to give students helpful, interesting insights into the history and structure of English. Such informal study makes students aware that English is a constantly changing language, influenced by other languages and cultures, historical events, and technology. Learning about language history reveals the different ways words enter the language, that some words came into English very early and some late, and that some words were deliberately constructed.

Finally, when language is taught as a medium of communication, the parts of speech, rules of grammar, word identification skills, and writing conventions such as capitalization and punctuation are treated as tools that help shape effective communications. When students recognize that communication is the purpose, correctness becomes the necessary adjunct to making that purpose clear and meaningful.

Evaluation as a Measure of Discovering and Creating Meaning

Procedures used for testing, appraising, and judging students' success in the English language arts curriculum must necessarily be in harmony with the philosophy underlying that curriculum. Thus, in an integrated curriculum with an emphasis on meaning, evaluation should focus on how successful students are at discovering and creating meaning for themselves.

This kind of evaluation will rely primarily on informal measures, for only by observing students actively communicating can their success with that process be determined. Unlike standardized tests, which provide only a general measure of achievement, informal measures provide a day-to-day look at a student's strengths and weaknesses in a variety of realistic situations. Suggestions for using student folders, conferences, observation instruments, and other informal procedures can be found in the Listening and Speaking, Composition, and Reading and Literature sections of this document.

"For process-oriented teachers. . . there is less effort put into deciding what the student needs to learn at a given moment and more into noticing or observing what is transpiring for the student."

Barrett Mandel

It follows, too, that assessment of skills in an integrated curriculum will be holistic in nature. That is, evaluation of writing ability is based on whole pieces of writing, and evaluation of reading ability is based on the comprehension of whole segments of text. The Writing Test for New York State Elementary Schools, the Preliminary Competency Test in Writing, the Regents Competency Test in Writing, the Regents Comprehensive Examination in English, and the Degrees of Reading Power tests, all outcome measures rather than demonstrations of subskill mastery, reflect a view of reading and writing as meaning-centered processes. Effective diagnostic teaching, as well as program planning, will take into account the results of State tests, the analysis of those results, and students' day-to-day responses.

Any assessment in a process-oriented curriculum must recognize that cognitive growth occurs over time, often at disparate rates. Progress will be made in some areas while other areas regress or stabilize, and it is greatly affected by a student's changing needs and interests. How much, how soon, and how often something is taught rests as much with a student as with the curriculum guidelines. Thus, evaluation will consider affective as well as cognitive goals and will take into account the success of communication in a variety of contexts for a variety of purposes.

Such evaluation will also reflect the recognition that some students may use alternative means of communicating and processing the communications of others. Some students who exhibit handicapping conditions that adversely affect their education may need to use Braille, sign, communication boards, or other means, and they will require modifications in instructional procedures, activities, and materials. Some students with handicapping conditions may also use alternative testing modifications in order to compete on an equal basis with their nonhandicapped peers. Although these modifications are often used in more formal testing situations, it may be appropriate to use them in less formal situations depending upon the needs of individual students. Effective teachers will be familiar with alternative techniques for

instruction and assessment and will use them appropriately and consistently with those who need them. Appendix E, *Students with Handicapping Conditions*, addresses the use of such techniques.

Finally, evaluation in an integrated curriculum must consider factors that go beyond student responses to tests and tasks but that ultimately affect those responses. "Characteristics of an Effective English Language Arts Curriculum K-12," found on pages 11-16, outlines some of those factors and may be converted to a checklist for evaluating local curricula.

PROGRAM PLANNING AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

School district program development provides the crucial link between State guidelines and classroom instruction. The locally developed program enables the district to tailor State curricula to the particular needs of all of its students, provides context and continuity for teachers' efforts, and ensures that those efforts are part of a larger design.

District program development involves planned, sequential activities that require a commitment of time and resources. The procedures for undertaking this process depend on what the teachers already know; the materials, methods, and activities already in use; and what the staff perceives as the strengths and weaknesses of the present English language arts program. Although the exact focus of the planning may vary from district to district, the outcome should include a document that reflects an emphasis on purpose and process but is adapted to local needs. The following suggestions provide direction for local planning, but curriculum developers should feel free to modify or reorder the procedures to accommodate district program status and needs.

District program development involves planned, sequential activities that require a commitment of time and resources.

Developing a Knowledge Base

Curriculum reform is most successful when teachers contribute to decisions; however, those decisions should grow out of a thorough knowledge of current theory and successful practice. Three ways of helping staff members learn about the state of the art in English education are:

- Devote staff meetings or in-service days to discussion of professional literature, videotapes, the State Education Department English language arts syllabus and manuals, or notes from workshops and conferences.
- Start a group whose members write and share their writing or read and share their reading. By participating in the process, teachers explore the relationship between the writer's craft and the reader's interpretation, enhancing appreciation for the demands of both tasks and generating ideas for classroom discussion and instruction.
- Establish discussion groups for in-depth exploration of a selected topic (e.g., peer conferences, reader response theory, or

alternative instructional and assessment procedures for students with handicapping conditions); allow for time and opportunity to try out the suggestions that arise.

Determining Local Needs

Once a common base of current knowledge has been established, a curriculum committee should be formed to:

- determine strengths and weaknesses of the present program
- make decisions for program change
- prepare a written statement or document reflecting those decisions
- provide support during implementation, and
- monitor the effectiveness of the new program.

A typical committee includes a district and/or building administrator and an English Department chairperson, plus representation from English teachers, elementary classroom teachers, content-area teachers, reading teachers, special education teachers, and librarians.

If distributed as a checklist to all appropriate staff for response, the "Characteristics of an Effective English Language Arts Curriculum K-12," found on pages 11-16 of this document, may be useful for evaluating the local program. The results would provide an overview of current practice and a basis for determining the next steps. It may be appropriate to begin a program of staff development to address needs identified in the initial survey. Staff development may include additional reading and discussion, outside consultants, interviews with effective English language arts teachers, and observation of exemplary programs in other districts.

Planning an Integrated Program

Before designing a program in which the language arts are integrated, it is necessary to determine which language arts objectives are being met and the materials and methods used for doing so. Taken together, the "Overview of Purposes and Objectives for Listening and Speaking K-12" (p. 26), "Overview of Purposes and Products for Composition K-12" (pp. 39-40), and "Overview of Purposes and Objectives for Reading and Literature K-12" (p. 66) can serve as another useful checklist for determining curriculum gaps and overlap. Depending on the results of this survey, teachers may want to move toward an integrated program by taking any of the following actions:

- Differentiate syllabus objectives according to the content of the *literature* program. Specific titles would then be taught to take advantage of specific reading, writing, listening and speaking objectives. The information on pp. 73-77, "Content of a Reading and Literature Program K-12," describes the range and variety of genres that should be included in the English language arts program.

- Differentiate objectives based on the content of the *writing* program. For example, a research report in grade 9 might focus on the effect of a writer's life on one of his or her works and in grade 10 might examine the effect of historical context on a writer's works. In grade 9 a student might analyze a literary work from a single critical approach and in grade 12 might look at a work from several critical approaches.
- Differentiate objectives according to *instructional approach*, so that a particular objective taught in one grade would build upon the procedures taught for that objective in the previous grade. For example, students might be taught to plan their reading by discussing the illustrations in grade 1, previewing titles and captions in grade 2, recognizing key words in grade 3, and generating their own questions in grade 4. This approach would be especially beneficial for students with handicapping conditions who may need a more deliberately structured program.
- Integrate the language arts within daily lessons. For example, use discussion to clarify issues, listening to appreciate a writer's craft, reading to prepare for writing, writing to explore a critical question from literature.
- Prepare thematic units that integrate the language arts by using a skill, topic, concept, genre, or project as the focus of the unit. In a descriptive writing unit, for example, students would read authors whose works are noted for their exemplary use of description while at the same time trying out those techniques in their own writing. A topical unit would incorporate reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language in the study of a holiday, hobby, career, or other topic of interest. In a concept-driven unit, students would be led through a variety of literature and language arts activities to reconcile diverse understandings of a single concept, such as humanity's relationship with nature. A genre unit would use the picture book, fable, sonnet, or other literary form to explore structure and theme in the students' reading and writing. A unit with a project as the focus would emphasize the participatory aspects (planning, goal setting, finding resources, etc.) of a project such as producing a class newspaper or constructing an Elizabethan stage.

  The procedures listed in Appendix F may be helpful for preparing instructional units such as these. Suggestions for other integrated units may also be found in the State Education Department curriculum guides for social studies, science, and library media skills.

Program implementation is a long, slow process that requires risk taking, experimentation, and frequent sharing of hurdles and milestones.

Once the focus of the integrated plan has been determined, it is important to prepare a written document that includes a philosophy, a set of realistic goals and objectives, methodology, supporting materials and resources, and a system of evaluation. This document serves not only as a record of decisions made by the curriculum committee but also as a blueprint, subject to change, for referral during implementation and evaluation of the program.

Implementing the Integrated Program

Although the planning stages may require the most time, implementation and evaluation are also critical. Program implementation is a long, slow process that requires risk taking, experimentation, and frequent sharing of hurdles and milestones. Monitoring by members of the curriculum committee or an outside consultant can be helpful and may take the form of classroom observations, modeling, conferences, or group discussion. It is important, too, that program goals be shared with other content-area teachers, creating a school-wide consistency in standards and expectations for reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Additional staff development may be in order, to prepare and provide support for teachers during the implementation and evaluation phases. Staff development should include special education teachers for their ability both to help general education teachers modify instruction and to provide consistent curriculum content to students receiving their language arts instruction in special education classes.

Evaluating the Integrated Program

The program is successful if it reflects the "Characteristics of an Effective English Language Arts Program K-12" and results in improved student achievement. These multiple criteria can be addressed only by using multiple assessment procedures, including formal and informal, cognitive and affective, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced, and State and local measures. Suggestions for evaluating listening and speaking, composition, and reading skills are offered in the Evaluation sections of this document, and a discussion of alternative testing techniques for students with handicapping conditions appears in Appendix E.

A balanced program assessment should also include:

- making the best use of available information
- determining a means for evaluating the effects of the English language arts program on content-area achievement, and
- providing a way for sharing the evaluation results with others, including parents.

Finally, it should be noted that evaluation should not be considered the final stage of program development but rather an essential vehicle for its continuous refinement.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM K-12

I. Program planning and management reflect a district-wide commitment to a quality English language arts program.

- **The district has a written statement of philosophy, goals, and objectives upon which to base instruction.**
- **Instruction in listening, speaking, composition, reading, and literature takes place at every grade level; is scheduled on a regular, planned basis; and is allotted a sufficient amount of time within the schedule.**
- **The English language arts curriculum is designed to ensure that language, listening, speaking, composition, reading, and literature are substantial components of an integrated language arts program.**
- **The program is supported by sufficient, qualified staff.**
- **Resources are adequate and readily available to teachers and students, including students with handicapping conditions.**
- **Administrators provide time and support for staff development and encourage the sharing of expertise within the district.**
- **Administrators and staff keep informed of current research and effective practices.**
- **Classroom teachers and specialists participate in the program evaluation process and in decisions for program change.**
- **Records of student achievement are maintained and used to make classroom, building, and district program decisions.**
- **Parents and community are kept informed about the programs in listening, speaking, composition, reading, and literature and the ways they can support them. They are aware of student placement procedures, course content, and book-selection policies.**
- **All students have access to the full range of programs and services provided by the district.**

II. The English language arts curriculum is consistent with current theory and research.

- **Listening, speaking, composition, reading, literature, and language instruction capitalizes on students' prior knowledge and recognizes the need to communicate feelings and significant events.**

Listening and Speaking
Oral language activities encourage interaction in which students share personal experiences, knowledge, values, emotions, attitudes, and opinions. Students receive sensitive acknowledgement, recognition, and response from teachers and peers.

Composition
Writing activities give students the opportunity to express their own feelings, experiences, ideas, knowledge, research, and imagination.

Reading and Literature
Instruction provides opportunities for personal response before, during, and after reading, both orally and in writing. Teachers encourage students to savor, think about, and interpret literary experiences before engaging in literary analysis, and to use their insights as a basis for making judgments and comparisons.

- **Listening, speaking, reading, and composition instruction takes place in meaningful contexts.**

Listening and Speaking
The focus of instruction is on the role of listening and speaking skills in the context of social interaction, transmission and interpretation of information, critical judgments, and appreciation and entertainment.

Composition
Instruction is based on whole pieces of purposeful writing rather than on grammar exercises, workbooks, and ditto sheets.

Reading and Literature
The focus of instruction is on appreciating and learning from whole pieces of text rather than on mastery of subskills.

- **Language arts instruction focuses on the creation and comprehension of meaning. Subskills are taught in the context of enhancing or clarifying meaning.**

Listening and Speaking
Features of oral language such as choice of language, rate, pitch, tone, volume, and nonverbal cues are considered for their effect on meaningful communication.

Composition
Instruction in the conventions of standard written English occurs during the revising and editing phases of the writing process and in the context of communicating meaning.

Reading and Literature
Reading-related skills such as phonic analysis, structural analysis, and reading for the main idea are taught as tools for deriving meaning from text.

- **Instruction creates independent, confident listeners, speakers, readers, and writers.**

Listening and Speaking
Oral activities are relevant to students because they are drawn from their own cultural and social contexts and needs and are related to the universal functions of language.

Composition
Writing activities are ones that students can recognize as having meaning and utility in their lives outside the classroom.

Reading and Literature
Reading activities focus on creating readers who choose to read.

- **The communication process is recognized as dynamic, interactive, and flexible.**

Listening and Speaking
Students learn to use a variety of methods to organize and present both informal and formal oral communications to meet the needs of different audiences.

Composition
Students are encouraged to write for a variety of audiences, to share their writing with those audiences when appropriate, and to recognize the differences between public and private writing.

Reading and Literature
Students learn to read for different purposes and to recognize the effects of the writer's craft on the reader's ability to understand and appreciate text.

- **Sufficient class time is provided for listening, speaking, composition, and reading processes to unfold in order to enable students to understand the processes and to realize that they can develop control over them.**

Listening and Speaking
Students have enough time to focus, attend to, and give feedback as listeners and to prepare, present, and respond to feedback as speakers.

Composition
Students have enough time to generate prewriting and to draft, revise, edit, and share their writing.

Reading and Literature
Students are provided with time to develop effective strategies for planning, monitoring, responding to, reflecting on, and applying their reading.

- **Teachers serve as role models for their students.**

Listening and Speaking
Teachers speak clearly, correctly, and in a well-modulated voice. They show courtesy to other speakers and listeners; they demonstrate different methods of organizing and presenting information orally for specific purposes and audiences.

Composition
Teachers value writing and share their writing processes and products with students. Use of reference materials and strategies for prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing are demonstrated for students.

Reading and Literature
Teachers demonstrate an enthusiasm for literature, reading aloud, sharing reactions to books, and reflecting on strategies that enhance comprehension and appreciation. They demonstrate their own purpose-setting and questioning behaviors and suggest ways of organizing and remembering information.

- **Teachers enable students to develop insights into their own learning processes and to evaluate the effectiveness of their learning strategies.**

Listening and Speaking
Students monitor their own listening and speaking processes by developing criteria and evaluating videotapes or audiotapes of their own presentations, by identifying a listening or speaking behavior that they wish to change and keeping a record of their progress over a specific period of time, and by keeping logs of their skills, behaviors, or attitudes.

Composition
Students are encouraged to talk about their planning, drafting, revising, and editing processes and strategies.

Reading and Literature
Students examine their own study skills, participate in goal-setting conferences with peers, and have the opportunity in group settings to reflect on their own reading processes.

III. The English language arts curriculum is taught within a language-rich environment.

- **A variety of building-wide and district-wide activities and events stimulate interest in, and appreciation for, the communication arts.**

Listening and Speaking
Speech and debate contests, performances of plays, and choral readings of original or well-known pieces show that the district values oral communication.

Composition
School newspapers, school or district literary magazines, and "Writer of the Week" programs provide the motivation for students to write and share their writing.

Reading and Literature
Reading is Fundamental programs, Read-a-thons, Author's Day, Book-It, and Parents as Reading Partners provide ways to extend school reading.

- **Teachers provide diverse opportunities for stimulating reading, writing, oral expression, and other forms of communication. They encourage role playing, group discussions, debates, and the reading, writing, and performing of dramatic monologues, choral readings, poetry, and drama.**

- **Teachers encourage students to understand and use communication for a variety of purposes.**

Listening and Speaking
Students have many formal and informal experiences in listening and speaking for pleasure, for social interaction, for information and understanding, and for evaluation purposes.

Composition
Students are given opportunities to write to express the self, to narrate, to explain, to describe, and to persuade.

Reading and Literature
Students are given many opportunities to read for enjoyment, information, and critical analysis and evaluation.

- **Teachers make accessible a variety of materials and equipment that foster self-expression and provide information and pleasure.**

Listening and Speaking
Students are encouraged to use a variety of media such as audiocassettes and videotape recorders to present, listen to, or analyze and critique oral communication.

Composition
Students have access to such resources as dictionaries, thesauruses, grammar texts, writing models, duplicating facilities, writing materials, and word processors.

Reading and Literature
The classroom library contains books of nonfiction, contemporary and traditional literature, newspapers, periodicals, and published student writings. Book displays reflect cultural diversity, current events, holidays, content-area topics, and special interests of students.

IV. The English language arts curriculum provides for individual and group needs through a variety of instructional configurations, methods, and materials.

- **Teacher-student conferences are a regular feature of instruction.**

Listening and Speaking
The teacher-student conference provides an opportunity for the teacher to evaluate the student's listening and speaking skills, to discuss with the student the preparation or presentation of material, to engage the student in problem solving, and to build the student's speaking confidence through constructive feedback.

Composition
Teacher-student conferences take place at any time during the writing process, not just at the end, to evaluate the finished product.

Reading and Literature
Teacher-student conferences provide opportunities for the teacher to observe student responses to a selection, to observe growth or change, and to observe and discuss reading strategies.

- **Students are paired or grouped for a variety of instructional purposes.**

Listening and Speaking
Small groups create an environment in which peers help each other to expand their listening and speaking vocabularies, stimulate critical thinking and problem solving, develop or improve auditory discrimination, foster listening comprehension, respond courteously to the ideas, suggestions, or questions of others, and focus on issues or interpretations without resorting to personal attacks.

Composition
Students are given opportunities to clarify their thinking and to engage in problem solving. Grouping may be used during the writing process to examine, expand, or focus content, to examine the student's writing strategies, to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the writing, or to share the writing for pleasure.

Reading and Literature
Students work with peers, sharing prior knowledge, learning strategies, and reactions to the reading. Students engage in individual or collaborative planning, problem solving, and synthesizing activities.

V. The English language arts curriculum is designed so that language, listening, speaking, composition, reading, and literature support and enhance learning in the content areas.

- **Staff development provides content-area teachers with the confidence and skill to integrate communication skills into content-area instruction naturally.**

Listening and Speaking
Teachers develop activities that allow students to listen for and relate essential information and to evaluate and generate statements of opinion, personal preferences, and values based on content-area materials.

Composition
Content-area teachers encourage students to write explanations, summaries, learning logs, historical calendars, scientific observations, process journals, reports, etc. in order to record, learn, clarify, or recall subject matter, to demonstrate their knowledge, and to integrate concepts and information. Students are also encouraged to write fiction based on fact, e.g., diaries, stories set in various countries or periods of history, or stories based on scientific principles studied in class.

Reading and Literature
Content-area teachers demonstrate and employ strategies that allow students to acquire knowledge of the content independently. Content-area textbooks are supplemented by appropriate historical fiction, primary source materials, biographies, essays, poetry, and informational trade books.

- **Students learn the value of using a variety of language arts strategies to enhance subject-matter learning.**

Listening and Speaking
Students learn to appreciate the value of discussion in critical thinking and problem solving. They learn to distinguish between literal and figurative use of language, to evaluate and use persuasive techniques, and to evaluate and use information transmitted by nonprint media.

Composition
Students learn when and when not to take notes; they learn to gather information from a variety of sources and to select an appropriate organizational structure for recording information. They analyze, paraphrase, summarize, and synthesize ideas to aid learning and remembering.

Reading and Literature
Students apply strategies such as asking their own questions, predicting content, and using key words and signal words to identify main ideas and details. They recognize the relationship of their prior knowledge to the topic, and they use study procedures that are consistent with the nature of the material and task requirements.

VI. The English language arts curriculum includes a variety of methods and procedures for evaluating student growth.

- **Classroom atmosphere encourages the valuing of students' work. Teachers respond positively to the efforts and accomplishments of all students and are prepared to provide alternative testing modifications to some students with handicapping conditions as indicated in their Individualized Educational Programs.**
- **Evaluation occurs in the context of meaningful language experiences. Needs identified through communication activities become the basis for follow-up instruction.**

Listening and Speaking
Listening and speaking skills are evaluated during discussions, group work, peer interviews, and role playing. Formal speeches are evaluated by preestablished criteria. Evaluation also measures the students' ability to understand and interpret messages from radio, television, film, and other nonprint media. After identifying the listening and speaking skills requiring additional instruction, teachers develop activities in which students use these skills in a variety of nonthreatening communication situations.

Composition
Whole pieces written at different times for different purposes and audiences are kept in the students' folders and evaluated. Early drafts as well as final drafts are kept to show the development of the students' writing process. Teachers first respond to the students' ideas and opinions before noting significant areas needing improvement.

Reading and Literature
Evaluation of reading skills occurs in the context of real reading situations. Teachers are alert to students' responses to books, the types of errors students make when reading aloud, the strategic behaviors students employ before, during, and after reading, and the results of students' efforts to comprehend the material.

- **Teachers record observations about affective as well as cognitive learning.**

Listening and Speaking
Students display a greater sense of self-worth as a result of their participation in discussions and feel comfortable about participating in a variety of listening and speaking activities. Students enjoy listening to and sharing personal experiences, stories, and drama, and they demonstrate an appreciation of language.

Composition
Students use writing as a means of self-expression, for clarification, for pleasure, or for other personal purposes. Students write stories, poems, journal entries, and letters with little or no prompting.

Reading and Literature
Students read for information and pleasure, making frequent use of class, school, and public libraries. Students discuss their reading with each other and with the teacher. Students read a range of quality literature and respond to their reading with depth and understanding.

- **Students participate in the evaluation process.**

Listening and Speaking
Students are encouraged to share, to help each other by praising one another's strengths as speakers, and to offer suggestions for improvement. They base their comments on notes, student response cards, or checklists. Students also engage in self-evaluation, using previously established criteria to review their own taped presentations.

Composition
Teachers and peers respond at various stages of the writing process. Student writing can be projected on a screen for group evaluation based on a checklist. Students occasionally select the pieces for evaluation.

Reading and Literature
Students are encouraged to keep records of their own reading and to examine their own growth.

- **Teacher-student conferences are used for evaluation.**

Listening and Speaking
Teachers may base evaluation on replaying and discussion of videotaped or audiotaped presentations. They may also refer to notes or other anecdotal records, review a checklist of criteria in response to a specific presentation, or discuss concerns raised by the student.

Composition
Conferences are used during the prewriting and drafting stages to focus on content but may be used at any stage. Conferencing is also used to discuss comments on a final piece of writing.

Reading and Literature
Conferences are used to discuss with the student the books read, to listen to oral reading, to determine readiness for a given task, to probe responses to tests or the reasons behind the responses, to observe and discuss study strategies, and to explore interests in relation to future projects.

VII. The English language arts curriculum establishes suitable methods of program evaluation.

- **The district recognizes that no single instrument can provide a comprehensive assessment of program effectiveness.**
- **The district uses the results of program evaluation to determine program changes.**
- **The district uses consistent, recognized procedures to assess program effectiveness.**

Listening and Speaking
Program evaluation measures the degree of improvement of listening and speaking skills over a period of time and focuses on skills that are unique to oral communication. Evaluation takes place in communication situations that are familiar and nonthreatening.

Composition
Writing folders are kept for all students. Holistic and analytic measures are used appropriately, and expectations reflect the awareness that growth requires considerable time. The district provides teachers with adequate and appropriate training in evaluating writing.

Reading and Literature
The effectiveness of the reading and literature program is determined not only by measurements of student growth but also by the time allotted for reading, availability of books and other media, the provision of opportunities for stimulating interest in reading, the balance of reading experiences, and the professional development of teachers.

STRANDS IN THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

The next three sections contain more specific information about the four language processes – reading, writing, listening, and speaking – and about the content area, literature. The sections provide scope and direction for developing an effective English language arts curriculum at the local level. The section "Providing a Strong Foundation for Literacy" outlines the distinctive features of a communication-centered kindergarten program. The material following that section has been grouped into three strands to correspond to the related manuals, *Listening and Speaking in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*, *Composition in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*, and *Reading and Literature in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*. Each section contains the following:

- a brief statement of the nature of that process and its place in the students' education
- overview – a summary in chart form of the **purposes** and **objectives** of instruction in that strand
- expectations – a more detailed chart that identifies a number of **focus skills** for each objective listed and provides supporting **comments**. Focus skills are those abilities that students will evidence when the objective has been achieved. Because they represent the pertinent features of the objectives, focus skill statements are a useful reference point for planning instruction or remediation, but they should not be taught in isolation of the objective. They are also useful as indicators of student achievement (e.g., "How well does this student relate ideas to personal experiences or prior knowledge?"). Comments are statements that provide relevant background information, suggest appropriate instructional activities, or give examples of contexts in which objectives may be met. They explain, extend, or otherwise provide additional details about the purpose, objectives, or focus skills to which they are related.
- suggestions about evaluation – methods and standards to use in evaluating student achievement in that strand.

The listening/speaking and reading/literature objectives are stated in terms of what effective learners are able to do to fulfill the identified purposes. Grade-level designations have not been assigned to objectives for two reasons. First, such activities as generating questions, relating text to one's experience, discussing an author's craft, or evaluating a story or speech are appropriate for students at all levels of ability.

Focus skill statements are a useful reference point for planning instruction or remediation, but they should not be taught in isolation of the objective.

There is little research support for a hierarchical ordering of skills in the language arts.

Although the material and the expected proficiency level would vary according to the learners' ages, interests, and developmental stages, the objectives should be addressed at all grade levels with a variety of texts and methods. The language arts are continuously developing skills, not mastered once and for all at a certain age but perfected by use, for a variety of purposes in a variety of contexts.

Secondly, there is little research support for a hierarchical ordering of skills in the language arts. Such a hierarchy would perpetuate a view of each of the language arts as a sequence of discrete subskills. Current research suggests that this notion is simplistic. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking all involve a dynamic interaction among learner, text, and instructional factors. Since these factors vary widely from district to district, it is more appropriate to discuss ways of differentiating objectives at the local level, where they can be coordinated with the rest of the instructional program. (See "Program Planning at the Local Level," pages 7-10, for ways of differentiating objectives.)

In addition to this syllabus, teachers are urged to consult the manuals *Listening and Speaking in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*, *Composition in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*, and *Reading and Literature in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*. They provide an expanded discussion of each process, contain many more specific suggestions for implementing and supporting each process in the classroom, and provide more detailed methods of evaluating student achievement.

PROVIDING A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR LITERACY

Young children come to school with a variety of linguistic, cognitive, psychological, and social abilities that can guide the selection of content and methodology of early reading and writing programs. Most children about to enter kindergarten understand over 5,000 words, speak in complex sentences, and are curious about the written appearance of their own language (Norton, 1983). Kindergartners are ready to discover the concepts of time, space, size, and quantity. They are learning to count and to identify letters, colors, and shapes. They can retell events if presented in a meaningful sequence and are beginning to develop the ability to group and classify items that share common characteristics. In addition, kindergartners are usually outgoing and friendly, while at the same time they are seeking warmth and security from others and assurance of their own self-worth.

A strong foundation for literacy begins with a kindergarten program that builds on existing abilities and fosters continued development through participation in real-life, meaningful situations. In such a program, students with handicapping conditions engage in activities that are appropriately modified, thus allowing such students to participate on an equal basis with their peers in developing early academic skills. When young children are given tasks that make sense to them, tasks with genuine functions and meaningful purposes, they are able to show skill as thinkers and language users that surpasses what has been commonly assumed (Donaldson, 1978). A curriculum rich in language, experience, and literature provides an abundance of meaningful situations in natural contexts.

A curriculum rich in language, experience, and literature provides an abundance of meaningful situations in natural contexts.

The Role of Language

When the curriculum provides for experiences in which listening and speaking are natural outcomes, a number of benefits result. Students think out loud, develop clear and concise expression, and learn the vocabulary that best communicates their message. Listening and speaking activities can flow out of as well as lead into reading and writing activities, strengthening the connections among the language arts. Oral and written activities help students and teacher be aware of each other's interests and needs. Such activities demonstrate that language is functional and involves a communicator, a message, an audience, and a purpose. Finally, there is strong evidence that oral language facility is highly correlated with reading and writing achievement. An early

literacy program that helps children develop, use, and investigate their own oral language provides an excellent foundation for helping children to understand, appreciate, and emulate the language of books.

The Role of Experience

The variety of experiences represented by a single class may range from the child who has visited orange groves in Florida to the child who is unable to recognize an orange. There is no way to equalize the breadth and depth of experiences among a group of children, but an effective kindergarten program should, to the greatest extent possible, provide planned experiences and capitalize on unplanned events as catalysts for listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. Experience provides a basis for using language, expanding concepts, sharing reactions, and appreciating the perceptions of others. Through participatory projects, explorations of the local environment, or structured field trips which extend and enrich their worlds, children learn to use all of their senses to plan, gather data, verbalize their impressions, and contribute ideas to group discussion. Without direct involvement, young children have little to talk about or write about beyond their own imaginations. Furthermore, first-hand experience motivates children to seek more information and enlarges the store of knowledge available to them when they begin to read and write.

The Role of Literature

One well-known predictor of early school success is preschool experience with books. Most children who have experienced books at home come to school knowing how to act like readers. They have learned to sit still, listen attentively, associate words and pictures, and respond to the text with reference to their own knowledge and experience. These children have also learned to associate the story-reading situation with warmth and emotional security and with the promise and possibilities of new worlds beyond their own. These behaviors and associations provide a solid foundation for teaching students to read for different purposes, to see relationships between books and their own lives, and to use a variety of strategies for comprehension and decoding. For children with limited book experience, or for those whose handicapping conditions may interfere with their ability to derive meaning from print, the teacher's first role is to observe carefully the ways those children use and relate to books in the classroom. The next step is to provide a wide variety of classroom opportunities for children to see the printed page, observe the pages turning, associate spoken with written words, hear the same story many times, have access to the same books for free reading, and produce individual- or group-experience stories of their own. Storytelling or reading by the teacher provides a context for youngsters' expanding vocabulary, nurtures the imagination, provides vicarious experiences, and fosters appreciation for the language of books. Children can develop their

powers of observation through concept books, satisfy their curiosity through informational books, appreciate the sounds, rhythm, and structure of language through poetry and pattern books, ponder the improbable through books of fantasy, and sharpen their wit through books of humor and nonsense. In short, literature offers limitless opportunities for making connections between language and experience.

The Role of Formal Reading Instruction

It should be clear to curriculum developers that for most beginning readers, especially those whose handicapping conditions may interfere with their ability to communicate, the best curriculum is one that provides as many opportunities as possible for students to use and encounter language in meaningful situations.

There is no sound research supporting mass instruction of formal reading skills or the use of phonics workbooks in kindergarten. Since it is hard for children of this age to grasp such abstract concepts as word boundaries, sound segmentation, and phonic generalizations, such phonics programs are rendered inappropriate. Instead, education should capitalize on this crucial period of language growth. Those students who come to kindergarten already knowing how to read should be praised for their accomplishment, provided with appropriate literature, and encouraged to share their reading with other students. When these students demonstrate a need for instruction in word identification, they should learn that word identification is an adjunct to, or facilitator for, deriving meaning from text, and it is one of several tools that help students become independent readers. A list of principles and instructional guidelines relating to the role of word identification in reading instruction is included in *Reading and Literature in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM

Listening and speaking are related processes, and both are essential tools for learning across the curriculum. Students may be able to *hear*, but they need to be taught to *listen*. They may be able to *speak*, but they need to be taught to *communicate effectively*. As students become adept listeners and speakers, they are able to relate new ideas to their own experiences, synthesize and analyze concepts, reflect on and evaluate their own ideas, judge the ideas of others, and, based on what they hear and discuss, formulate new relationships, concepts, and judgments. These thinking skills are essential in all content areas. In a curriculum that provides for purposeful listening and speaking activities in every content area, all students, including those whose handicapping conditions affect their ability to communicate, will develop standards for effective communication and apply those standards to themselves and others.

Effective instruction in listening and speaking begins with providing a flexible and secure classroom climate in which students receive sensitive response to their personal experiences, prior knowledge, values, emotions, and attitudes.

Effective instruction begins with providing a flexible and secure classroom climate in which students receive sensitive response to their personal experiences, prior knowledge, values, emotions, and attitudes. Effective teachers are aware of the needs and abilities of students whose communication methods differ from the majority of students in the class and will facilitate the participation of those students in discussion and other activities.

Instruction in listening and speaking should focus simultaneously on both roles in the communication process. In order to communicate a message effectively, speakers need to be in command of the content and also be aware of purpose, audience, and use of voice and gesture. Speakers also need to be aware of the social context and levels of language appropriate for that audience and situation. As listeners, students must learn to listen actively for specific purposes in a variety of social contexts. They need to develop strategies for processing and evaluating the ideas and information acquired.

In the elementary grades, students should be exposed to a broad range of listening and speaking experiences to increase their vocabulary and enhance their understanding and appreciation of the English language. They should interact with others in a variety of group situations and learn appropriate behaviors for acquiring and sharing information. They should begin to develop skill for determining the truthfulness, accuracy, and quality of oral information.

At the secondary level, students should continue to gain useful listening and speaking skills through informal interaction. They should

also participate in more formal activities such as oral reporting, interviewing, debating, problem solving, and decision making. They should increase their ability to respond aesthetically and to react critically to persuasive material or dramatic performances.

Supporting activities for helping students become purposeful and effective listeners and speakers can be found in *Listening and Speaking in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LISTENERS AND SPEAKERS K-12

The Overview chart on page 26 identifies the four purposes for listening and speaking and the instructional objectives for each. These purposes are:

- listening and speaking for social interaction
- listening and speaking for information and understanding
- listening and speaking for critical analysis and evaluation
- listening and speaking for personal response.

The Chart of Expectations that follows is intended to help develop programs to provide students with numerous and varied opportunities to use and respond to oral language. The development of oral communication skill is recursive and continuous, with students sometimes refining earlier skills and sometimes exploring new ones. For this reason, skills have not been assigned to specific grade levels. Students need to engage in activities that develop their listening and speaking skills at *all* grade levels.

Objectives

For each of the above listening and speaking purposes a number of expected objectives have been identified. The objectives are stated in terms of what effective listeners and speakers should be able to do in order to fulfill adequately the four purposes identified. Since the instructional objectives are valid at all grade levels, the selection of appropriate activities and degree of expected achievement is where differentiation should occur. For some students whose handicapping conditions necessitate the development of communication skill in other than traditional oral language, the purposes for listening and speaking can be met through modification of the objectives and related activities.

Each objective includes a list of related focus skills, those abilities students will evidence when the objective is achieved. They provide direction for developing activities to help students achieve the objectives, and they are useful indicators of the level of student proficiency. Using the focus skills as criteria, teachers can determine proficiency through observation of the intended student behavior or can infer proficiency by observation of related behaviors.

OVERVIEW OF PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES FOR LISTENING AND SPEAKING K-12

Purposes	*Objectives – The student will:*
I. LISTENING AND SPEAKING FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION *Communicating in everyday interpersonal situations*	1. Practice the elements of good listening and speaking in conversation 2. Demonstrate principles of good listening and speaking in group situations 3. Participate in meetings as a member of an organization 4. Take and give messages with completeness and accuracy
II. LISTENING AND SPEAKING FOR INFORMATION AND UNDERSTANDING *Acquiring, interpreting, applying, and transmitting information*	1. Follow and give oral directions 2. Listen for and relate essential information 3. Listen for and use language that demonstrates appropriate patterns of organization in formal presentations 4. Identify and use critical thinking and problem-solving skills 5. Identify and use vocal characteristics that influence the meaning of oral language 6. Identify and use levels of language, idiomatic expressions, and figures of speech that enhance oral communication 7. Interpret and use nonverbal cues, such as body language and visual aids, that enhance an oral message
III. LISTENING AND SPEAKING FOR CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION *Evaluating and generating information and ideas according to personal or objective criteria*	1. Formulate and express judgments about the content, organization, and delivery of oral communication 2. Evaluate and generate statements of opinion, personal preference, and values 3. Evaluate and use persuasive techniques 4. Evaluate and present ideas and information transmitted by nonprint media and visual aids
IV. LISTENING AND SPEAKING FOR PERSONAL RESPONSE *Communicating for appreciation and entertainment*	1. Enjoy listening to and sharing personal experiences, stories, and drama 2. Appreciate and orally interpret sounds, words, imagery, repetition, rhyme, and rhythm patterns in language

CHART OF EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LISTENERS AND SPEAKERS K-12

The following chart indicates the focus skills or behaviors students will evidence when they have achieved the objectives identified for each of the purposes of listening and speaking. The degree to which a student exhibits these behaviors serves as an indication of that student's progress toward meeting the objectives.

I. LISTENING AND SPEAKING FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION
Communicating in Everyday Interpersonal Situations

OBJECTIVE 1: The student will practice the elements of good listening and speaking in conversation.

Listening Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Distinguish between hearing and listening
- Determine that the situation requires listening and then prepare to listen
- Listen to discover speaker's purpose
- Identify own purpose for listening
- Avoid interrupting
- Maintain eye contact as appropriate
- Provide verbal/nonverbal feedback to speaker
- Relate ideas to personal experiences or prior knowledge
- Respect a speaker's unique or different manner of communicating and obtain meaning despite unusual accent, alternate means of speaking, or vocal quality

Speaking Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Use language appropriate to purpose, occasion, and audience
- Offer ideas related to topic
- Be responsive to listeners' needs and reactions
- Practice courtesy (e.g., avoid sarcasm or ridicule; avoid trying to dominate the conversation)
- Make relevant and coherent statements either to initiate a conversation or to respond appropriately

Comments

The teacher should serve as a role model and should, by example, encourage students to speak clearly and in an organized manner, to speak in a well-modulated voice, and to show courtesy to other speakers and listeners. Teachers need to help students understand that active listening plays a vital role in interpersonal relationships, both inside and outside the classroom.

OBJECTIVE 2: The student will demonstrate principles of good listening and speaking in group situations.

Listening Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Seek clarification, if needed, by asking questions
- Paraphrase and summarize to clarify
- Withhold judgment until speaker finishes
- Concentrate more on content than delivery

Speaking Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Contribute ideas in brainstorming
- Take turns contributing to discussion
- Explain or clarify meaning of ideas offered
- Respond courteously to ideas offered by others
- Summarize to assure focus and clarity
- Focus comments on issues or interpretations; avoid personal attacks

Comments

Informal discussion in a group or circle provides practice for active listening, that is, listening to hear meaning as well as words. The teacher should set the climate for informal grouping by acting as a facilitator. As many students as possible should be involved so that a number of views may be freely discussed; students should be encouraged to ask questions of a speaker at the close of the speaker's remarks. Students should be given a number of opportunities during the year to assume the role of speaker or discussion leader.

OBJECTIVE 3: The student will participate in meetings as a member of an organization.

Listening Focus Skills—The ability to:	*Speaking Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
• Listen attentively during all stages of a meeting in order to respond according to established procedures	• Contribute to a meeting by participating in discussion in accordance with established procedures	Students can better understand the operation of a meeting by forming a class club for a common purpose. The aims of parliamentary procedure should be discussed and students should be required to incorporate such procedures into the club's meetings. Club officers should be changed at reasonable intervals so a number of students have the opportunity to function in leadership roles.

OBJECTIVE 4: The student will take and give messages with completeness and accuracy.

Listening Focus Skills—The ability to:	*Speaking Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
• Listen attentively in order to record important details • Recognize incomplete and unclear messages in order to seek clarification • Recognize the degree of importance of the message in order to respond appropriately	• Provide complete and accurate information • Restate information when necessary to assure clarity and accuracy of the message • Identify the intended recipient of the message and the message's degree of importance	Giving and taking messages is one of the most "real-world" skills students will need. Activities such as arranging for interviews or guest speakers, requesting or clarifying information, or ordering resource material provide natural opportunities for students to be the givers or receivers of messages. Literature lessons may also provide creative opportunities for having students act out situations in which characters give and receive oral messages related to the events in the story. Students should also have the opportunity to transmit oral messages from person to person as a way of discovering that a message can change in the transmission, or that cultural differences can result in misinterpretation; therefore, careful listening and accurate restatement are essential.

II. LISTENING AND SPEAKING FOR INFORMATION AND UNDERSTANDING
Acquiring, Interpreting, Applying, and Transmitting Information

OBJECTIVE 1: The student will follow and give oral directions.

Listening Focus Skills—The ability to:	*Speaking Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
• Identify essential details • Note sequence of steps accurately • Use strategies such as mnemonics and signal words to aid recall	• Provide essential details • Give a clear sequence of steps • Use signal or transition words to provide clues to the listener	Both speakers and listeners need to be able to identify essential information and recognize the appropriate sequencing of that information. Students can practice these skills in the content areas through activities such as explaining how to play a game, perform a process, or give directions while other students listen and try to follow the speaker's instructions.

OBJECTIVE 2: The student will listen for and relate essential information.

Listening Focus Skills—The ability to:	*Speaking Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
• Identify main ideas either directly stated or implied	• State main ideas clearly • Support main ideas with relevant details and examples	Learning to listen actively requires the listener to understand the purpose for listening and to assign meaning to the

- Identify relevant supporting details and examples
- Identify relationships among ideas either directly stated or implied

- Make clear the relationships among ideas

message. Some students who have grown up with television have a relatively short attention span, which in turn affects their ability to participate in conversations and other situations in which active listening is required.

One activity that could help students to develop their active listening skills would be for them to prepare news broadcasts or oral commentaries based on some aspect of content-area school work. Listeners respond, identifying relevant information, thus reinforcing content-area knowledge.

OBJECTIVE 3: The student will listen for and use language that demonstrates appropriate patterns of organization in formal presentations.

Listening Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Anticipate the speaker's plan of organization
- Identify key words and phrases that indicate purpose, main ideas, and important details
- Identify signal words that indicate the organizational structure of the speaker's message: enumeration, cause-effect, comparison-contrast, sequence of events
- Listen for a conclusion that summarizes the main ideas presented

Speaking Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Indicate a plan of organization as part of the introduction to a formal presentation
- Use appropriate key words and phrases to emphasize purpose, main ideas, and important details
- Use signal words to provide clues to the organizational structure of the message
- Conclude the presentation by summarizing main ideas

Comments

Students need to have experience in preparing oral presentations for a variety of purposes in order to understand that the purpose for the communication dictates its content and organization. Students may be asked to narrate a story prompted by a series of pictures; to compare or contrast two events, pieces of literature, characters, or processes; to make and support generalizations based on personal experiences, literature, or content-area materials. Instruction should provide students with a range of options for organizing and presenting their ideas and sufficient time to select, prepare, and organize their materials carefully.

OBJECTIVE 4: The student will identify and use critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Listening Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Identify the problem being considered
- Anticipate the speaker's line of reasoning
- Identify conflicting, missing, or unclear information in order to seek clarification
- Consider possible outcomes and draw conclusions based on information heard
- Suspend judgment until all proposed solutions have been presented

Speaking Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Describe a problem accurately
- Provide clear, complete, consistent information about the problem
- State tentative hypotheses and predict possible outcomes
- Use a clear line of reasoning to develop solutions
- Suggest one or more possible solutions

Comments

Students of all ages can benefit from posing a problem or problems they would like to have solved (e.g., how to stop lunchtime littering in the school yard). In the lower grades, one student may present a problem related to a school activity or to subject matter while the others listen. Using the information presented, students suggest possible solutions. Older students can be led into recognizing and employing a more formal process for problem solving, e.g., defining the problem, analyzing the problem, suggesting possible solutions, developing and comparing solutions, selecting the best solution, trying out the solution, and evaluating the solution.

OBJECTIVE 5: The student will identify and use vocal characteristics that influence the meaning of oral language.

Listening Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Recognize that meanings of statements vary according to vocal characteristics such as tone, volume, pitch, and rate

Speaking Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Use vocal characteristics effectively to emphasize meaning

Comments

The effect of vocal emphasis on the meaning of an oral communication is often taken for granted. One activity that helps students to recognize this connection is one in which a line from a play, poem, or story being studied is written on the chalkboard. Students are asked to read it aloud a number of times, each time stressing a different word. After each reading, students interpret the new meaning of the line. This activity can lead to a discussion of how certain types of punctuation (e.g., question mark, exclamation point) indicate in written communication what voice does in oral communication. Students who are given the opportunity to write and perform dialogue for skits and short plays can apply what they have learned to a real communication situation.

OBJECTIVE 6: The student will identify and use levels of language, idiomatic expressions, and figures of speech that enhance oral communication.

Listening Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Distinguish between literal and figurative meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence
- Recognize words or phrases that convey feelings or images
- Recognize terminology or jargon that is unique to a particular occupation or group of people
- Recognize the level and intended meaning of language and idiomatic expressions used by a speaker
- Recognize and respect cultural differences in language used by a speaker

Speaking Focus Skills—The ability to:

- Use figurative language such as metaphor to add color, variety, and clarity to spoken messages
- Choose vivid, descriptive words and phrases to suggest feelings or images
- Use terminology that has specific meaning in relation to a specialized topic or task
- Use idiomatic expressions and a level of language appropriate to the audience and situation

Comments

Students need to be encouraged to think about language, to examine it, and to explore its possibilities. Sensitivity to language is especially important when poetry is read and original poetry is written. Younger students can read or have read to them stories such as *The King Who Rained* and learn about homophones. Through word play, students can be made aware of homonyms, antonyms, and synonyms and discover the multiple meanings of words. Older students can learn to use oral language playfully by writing and presenting puns and riddles. They can examine the literal and figurative meanings of idioms; explore the different levels of usage for various audiences; and become aware of figures of speech they encounter in their reading, hear in the media, or note in conversations.

OBJECTIVE 7: The student will interpret and use nonverbal cues, such as body language and visual aids, that enhance an oral message.

Listening Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Interpret the posture, facial expressions, and gestures displayed by a speaker
- Recognize the relationship between visual support materials and oral content
- Recognize that a speaker may exhibit unintentional or uncontrollable facial expressions and body movements

Speaking Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Use appropriate facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, and posture to reinforce the oral message
- Use models, charts, maps, graphs, or other visuals to support an oral presentation

Comments

Communication may take place through body language, and students should become conscious of its importance. They should recognize the need to use nonverbal cues to clarify or expand a message and to adjust the manner of communication to accommodate a listener's special needs. Teachers can focus students' attention on body language through activities involving pantomime and through use of film and videotape clips that are run without sound. Students interpret the messages conveyed by facial expressions, posture, and body movements. These kinds of activities have the additional advantage of sensitizing students to the problems of hearing-impaired individuals and to the differing cultural interpretations of nonverbal signals such as eye contact.

Students should be encouraged to use visual aids to clarify and make more interesting oral presentations. This activity is especially appropriate in the content areas.

III. LISTENING AND SPEAKING FOR CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION
Evaluating and Generating Information and Ideas According to Personal or Objective Criteria

OBJECTIVE 1: The student will formulate and express judgments about the content, organization, and delivery of oral communication.

Listening Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Formulate judgments about appropriateness of ideas used in meeting the requirements of purpose and audience
- Evaluate the adequacy of examples, details, or reasons used to support ideas
- Judge the quality of content and delivery, based upon needs of audience, purpose, and context
- Formulate judgments regarding the overall organization of the presentation
- Judge the validity of the speaker's conclusions in light of the information presented
- Evaluate the delivery in terms of the effective use of voice, language, posture, gestures, and visuals
- Evaluate the influence of delivery on content

Speaking Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Select and present ideas that are appropriate to the purpose and audience
- Select examples, details, and reasons that will adequately support the ideas
- Select content and choose strategies for delivery in light of audience, purpose, and context
- Organize presentation so that ideas and information are clear
- Draw valid conclusions from information presented
- Enhance delivery by effective use of voice, language, posture, gestures, and visuals
- Enhance the content by the use of effective delivery strategies

Comments

Students need help in developing criteria they can apply both as speakers and listeners to evaluate the content, organization, delivery, and effectiveness of oral communications. Such criteria might include evaluation of the completeness, accuracy, and relevance of the materials and information presented; the clarity and organization of the presentation; the validity of conclusions drawn from information presented; the effectiveness of the speaker's voice quality, enunciation, and delivery; the degree of eye contact with the audience and the use of body language; and the appropriateness of visual aids.

OBJECTIVE 2: The student will evaluate and generate statements of opinion, personal preference, and values.

Listening Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Judge the relevance of statements in relation to the topic
- Judge the completeness of support material
- Judge the appropriateness of reasons, examples, or details used to support statements
- Evaluate the accuracy of details provided to support the statements
- Consider the experience, qualifications, and possible bias of the speaker
- Identify the effect of one's own point of view in evaluating the opinions, personal preferences, and values expressed by others

Speaking Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Make statements based on opinion, personal preference, or values
- Provide sufficient support for ideas expressed
- Provide appropriate reasons, examples, or details to support statements
- Provide accurate information to support the position taken
- Recognize the effect of one's own experience, qualifications, and possible bias on one's statements
- Recognize the similarities and differences between the points of view of the speaker and the audience

Comments

Students need the opportunity to discuss issues of importance to them, especially when there is a diversity of opinion within the group. They need to be open to opinions presented with logic, organization, and clarity, and to engage in and respond to questioning. Both as speakers and listeners, students need to be able to identify relevant, cogent arguments, as well as extraneous information. Formal debates or brief speeches based on some aspect of content-area study or literature may be one way for students to accomplish this purpose, but informal activities followed by feedback need to be included in the program as well.

OBJECTIVE 3: The student will evaluate and use persuasive techniques.

Listening Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Identify fallacies of logic that lead to unsupported conclusions
- Evaluate the effectiveness of propaganda devices used to achieve an intended effect
- Determine the degree to which logical examples are used to persuade the audience
- Evaluate the influence of body language, gestures, and visuals used in the presentation
- Discriminate between the apparent message and the hidden agenda

Speaking Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Avoid using fallacies of logic that may lead the audience to faulty conclusions
- Avoid using propaganda devices to mislead the audience
- Use logical examples to support arguments
- Use body language, gestures, and visuals to increase the impact of the presentation
- Make modifications based on perceptions of audience response

Comments

Political speeches, advertisements, news commentaries, and debates are some examples of persuasive messages that require critical listening. Both speakers and listeners need to be alert to fallacies of logic, unsupported statements, and the slanting of language used in the presentation. Listeners also need to be aware of the variety of propaganda techniques that a speaker can use. In addition, listeners should be alert to nonverbal signals used to send a hidden message (e.g., the presence of an American flag in the background).

OBJECTIVE 4: The student will evaluate and present ideas and information transmitted by nonprint media and visual aids.

Listening Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Evaluate the impact of the medium on the message

Speaking Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Use appropriate visual aids and nonprint media to enhance the intended message

Comments

Visual aids help the audience grasp complex or difficult ideas or relationships. Speakers can use maps, graphs, photographs, charts, film clips, or other visual aids to enhance presentations based on content-area materials and literature. Listeners need to evaluate the use of the media or visual aids in relation to the effectiveness of the presentation.

IV. LISTENING AND SPEAKING FOR PERSONAL RESPONSE
Communicating for Appreciation and Entertainment

OBJECTIVE 1: The student will enjoy listening to and sharing personal experiences, stories, and drama.

Listening Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Give full attention to the oral presentation or performance
- Follow structure, sequence, or pattern
- Identify details or examples that are appealing or interesting
- Identify actions, events, or situations (e.g., characterization, plot, setting, dialogue) that create an emotional response

Speaking Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Use voice and intonation patterns to enhance the presentation
- Present material using an identifiable structure, sequence, or pattern
- Include details or examples that are appealing or interesting
- Create an emotional response in the audience by relating or interpreting personal experiences, stories, or drama

Comments

Students should have a variety of experiences in which they share personal narratives, tell or retell stories, or give dramatic presentations. Some presentations can be prepared for peers, some for younger students in the school. Feedback should be positive and constructive, focusing on those parts of the presentation that were particularly appealing, interesting, or exciting.

OBJECTIVE 2: The student will appreciate and orally interpret sounds, words, imagery, repetition, rhyme, and rhythm patterns in language.

Listening Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Identify sounds and words which create images
- Identify repetition and its effects
- Identify rhyming patterns
- Identify rhythm patterns and their effects
- Interpret the implied meaning of figurative language

Speaking Focus Skills – The ability to:

- Use sounds and words to create images
- Use repetition to create an emotional or aesthetic effect
- Use rhyming patterns
- Use rhythm patterns to create an emotional or aesthetic effect
- Use figurative language effectively

Comments

A sensitivity to language is important, not only for effective oral communication but also to provide a solid foundation for writing. Students need frequent opportunities to prepare and listen to a variety of oral presentations to become acquainted with the range and flexibility of English and its ability to affect both the mind and the emotions. Speeches, dramatic dialogues or monologues, poetry readings, and choral readings are some of the types of presentations students should be exposed to and participate in, as well as emulate in their own writing.

EVALUATION OF LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

Assessing the listening and speaking component of the English language arts program should begin by determining the degree to which the program matches the characteristics found on pages 11-16. One of those characteristics refers to the importance of using a variety of methods and procedures for evaluating student growth. This section describes several of those methods and procedures.

When evaluating listening and speaking skills, teachers must consider the purpose, the audience, and the situation. A criterion suitable for assessing a student's participation in a small-group discussion may not be suitable for assessing a student's presentation to the whole class. Storytelling to young children would be evaluated by criteria different from those used to evaluate the relating of a personal experience to one's peers. Listening for literal comprehension to follow directions would be evaluated quite differently from listening in order to detect attitudes or biases.

Evaluation may be either informal or formal. By perceiving the way students respond to spoken comments or directions, teachers can determine informally if students are listening purposefully. Teachers can also evaluate speaking skills by observing students' responses in class discussions, small-group work, or student-teacher conferences. Means to formal, structured evaluation may include teacher-student conferences, tests, assignments, and checklists. Other evaluations of listening and speaking skills can be done by the students themselves or by their peers.

Students with handicapping conditions may need alternative testing modifications as indicated in their Individualized Educational Programs (IEP). Teachers should be familiar with these techniques and be prepared to use them appropriately and consistently with those students who need them.

Evaluating Listening Skills

Criteria for evaluating listening should reflect courtesy, attentiveness, objectivity, enjoyment, awareness of the purpose of listening, and participation through thoughtful questions and feedback.

Students can be evaluated informally on how well they follow oral directions, on the quality of the feedback they give to a speaker, on the courtesy they show during a group discussion, and on the attention they give to the discussion following a dramatic production or oral reading. How well students listen can also be evaluated informally by using open-ended questions that reveal their skills in inferential listening.

In addition to informal evaluation, it's important on occasion to evaluate listening skills in a more formal manner. Most often, listening tests are objective tests of literal comprehension, but other possibilities exist. For formal evaluation purposes, teachers can develop a checklist of elements that reflect good listening skills.

Other activities for formal evaluation of group listening skills might include: quizzing students on a poem or story that has been read to them; having students summarize the main ideas and essential supporting details of an oral report; and having students answer brief, content-related questions after a movie, filmstrip, or recording.

Evaluating Speaking Skills

Teachers need to keep in mind that speaking, especially in a formal situation, makes many students feel vulnerable and is perhaps more threatening to adolescents than to younger children. Indeed, there are adults who refuse to address even a small group, and most teachers can remember how nervous they felt when they faced their first classes. It is therefore vital that students understand that evaluations will enable them to be more willing participants and to become more confident, competent speakers. Showing students how something could have been done differently, rather than pointing out what was wrong, is very important. Evaluation should take place immediately; its effectiveness diminishes greatly with the passage of time, even when the speaking activity is recorded for later analysis.

Informal speaking activities such as discussions or group work can be evaluated while the activity is going on. Teachers can note levels of individual participation, quality of contributions, and mastery of group participation skills. Extra encouragement or attention can then be offered when it is needed.

Evaluation of formal speeches involves five different components, all of which must be considered in light of purpose and audience. These are: (1) preparation, (2) introduction, (3) content, (4) conclusion, and (5) delivery. Speakers must know the evaluation criteria that will be used, and they must have instruction in all five components before any assessment is made.

Because speaking skills develop with practice over time, teachers need to keep a record of student growth in

formal and informal presentations. Specific checklists for use in evaluating listening and speaking skills may be found in the Appendices to *Listening and Speaking in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*. In addition, teachers of the speech- and hearing-handicapped, who have had extensive training in speaking and communication skills, can often provide classroom teachers with helpful suggestions for evaluation.

Methods

Self-evaluation Checklists—Students need to be able to judge how well they fulfill their roles as listeners and/or speakers in a variety of situations. By judging the success with which they engage in specific listening and speaking situations, students have the opportunity to identify their own strengths and to become aware of weaknesses that need further attention.

Peer Evaluation—Working in **pairs** or **small groups**, students may use a checklist or rating scale to clarify their suggestions for each other. Students should be very familiar with the criteria used so the results can be constructively shared with the student whose skills are being evaluated. **Conferencing**, another method of peer evaluation, is more specific than group discussion. Another very simple yet effective evaluation technique is the use of the **student response card**. Students assess each other by writing a few positive comments on a small card. The cards are kept to provide a concrete source of encouragement to the student as well as to provide information about specific strengths noted by the group.

Teacher Evaluation—**Oral comments** and brief **notes** exchanged by teacher and student are common evaluation methods. Teachers may also use **class logs** and **anecdotal records** for this purpose. Evaluation during a **student-teacher conference** allows participants to discuss specific points of concern. A checklist may be used to assess the student's strengths and weaknesses, and teacher and student together then develop ideas for addressing identified problems. To be effective, such conferences should be held in a relaxed atmosphere, with the teacher taking care not to create a situation in which the student feels that his or her role is to accede meekly to the teacher's wishes, aims, or ideas. The teacher should be as much a listener as a speaker, keeping in mind that positive feedback will yield more improvement than will negative comments. The teacher should remember that students cannot direct their own learning without some feedback about their performance.

Audiovisual Aids—Audiotape and videotape recorders can be used for oral activities including speeches, small- and large-group discussions, class meetings, group reports, and individual presentations, enabling students to hear and see themselves as others do. Students who might be reluctant to rehearse a presentation repeatedly will often want to retape several times to produce a better recording. The use of audiovisual equipment helps students assess and reassess their strengths and weaknesses as listeners and speakers. Audio- and videotaping, however, are time-consuming and should be used selectively for specific learning and evaluation objectives. This method can be particularly helpful when used on an ongoing basis for evaluating the listening and speaking skills of some students with handicapping conditions.

COMPOSITION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM

Writing is a process that requires a person to cope with a number of variables: **method of development** (narrating, explaining, describing, reporting, persuading), **tone** (from personal to formal), **form** (from free verse to a formal letter to a research report), **purpose** (from discovering and expressing personal feelings and values to conducting the impersonal business of everyday life), and **audience** (self, classmates, teachers, the world). Effective writing programs enable students to select from and combine these variables to shape particular pieces of writing.

Programs that teach writing as a process emphasize writing as a natural and integral part of the curriculum, encourage whole pieces of writing for real purposes and real audiences, and provide instruction in all phases of the writing process. In process-oriented classrooms, prewriting activities stimulate and guide students to acquire new information or use existing information. Ideas elicited during prewriting are developed in the drafting phase, in an environment in which students are free to consult each other, teachers, or other sources. During revision, students are helped to rethink choices made about the content and are taught to add, delete, or rearrange material in light of audience and purpose. Students learn that editing makes their writing suitable for publication or sharing and that errors must be corrected if the communication is to be accurate and clear. Finally, students see their best work published, perhaps as part of a bulletin-board display, school newspaper, literary magazine, or class anthology. From prewriting to publication, students in a process-oriented classroom learn to view writing as a means of clear and effective communication. Suggestions and activities for providing support to students during each phase of the writing process can be found in *Composition in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*.

From prewriting to publication, students in a process-oriented classroom learn to view writing as a means of clear and effective communication.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT WRITERS K-12

The Overview on pages 39-40 identifies five purposes for writing and several forms of writing through which students may achieve the desired purposes.

The purposes for writing are:

- to express self
- to narrate
- to explain
- to describe
- to persuade.

The expectations for student writers are grouped in levels and are not expressed by grade because of the wide variation in individual abilities and backgrounds. For example, in Level I, grades K-3, a second-grade class may include students who are not ready to do more than relate a personal experience orally as well as students who are able to write a complete paragraph, explaining in logical sequence how to play a game or how to make a paper airplane. In Level II, grades 4-6, one student's paragraph may consist of a single topic sentence with two or three sentences of supporting details, while another's paragraph may have a complex topic sentence and a variety of supporting sentences with a more sophisticated vocabulary and greater elaboration of details.

However, by the end of the third grade, most students should have had experience in writing for all the purposes and in all the forms listed in Level I. By the end of the sixth grade, most students should have had experience in writing for all the purposes and in all the forms listed in Level II, and so forth in Levels III and IV. Since there will be some students who cannot complete all the expectations listed, teachers should adapt the curriculum accordingly.

The products presented for the various levels and purposes are intended only as a starting point or guide. They are not rank ordered and should be considered neither all-inclusive nor -exclusive. Most of the products require the development of increasingly sophisticated writing skills or include more complex focus skills as they progress from K to 12. The journal, for example, appears at each level but requires more of the writer at the 10-12 level than at the 4-6 level.

Teachers are encouraged to expand the list of products by mixing the purposes and products presented; e.g., they may have students write a narrative poem instead of a poem with a fixed form. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to extend products beyond a level; e.g., the myth suggested for Level III (7-9) could also be a product at Level IV (10-12), but at this level it would require an explanation of a "concept" or some other abstraction. Merely repeating the product at a higher level without requiring more thinking or writing skills becomes busy work and denies students the opportunity to grow.

Districts or individuals may develop the curriculum further by deciding which writing tasks and focus skills will be introduced at what grade and by determining the criteria for achievement. To establish a standard of excellence, see those criteria used to score the Writing Test for New York State Elementary Schools, the Preliminary Competency Test in Writing, the Regents Competency Test in Writing, and the Regents Comprehensive Examination in English.

OVERVIEW OF PURPOSES AND PRODUCTS FOR COMPOSITION K-12

Purposes	*Products*
I. TO EXPRESS SELF *To express personal feelings, reactions, values, interests, or attitudes*	• Sequence of sentences recounting personal feelings or reactions to an experience or event (moving from oral to written form) • Autobiographical sketch • Friendly letter • Poem • Paragraph(s) of personal feelings/reactions to an experience or event • Journal entry • Personal response to literature
II. TO NARRATE *To tell a fictional story or to give an account of real events*	• Narrative of actual experience • Short story • Journal entry • Fable • Folktale • Skit • Feature article • Autobiographical sketch • Myth • Script • Script adapted from a work of literature • Humorous newspaper column
III. TO EXPLAIN *To make factual information clear and understandable*	• Word, phrase, caption (used to label) • Sentence (moving from dictated to independently written) • Directions • How to • Letter of invitation • Business letter – of request – ordering merchandise – of complaint • Research report • News article and headline • Biographical sketch based on a personal interview • Biographical report • Book report • Telegram

Purposes	*Products*
	• Essay – on a process – deductive essay – formal essay • Accident report • Character study based on a work of literature • Précis • Letter of application • Résumé
IV. TO DESCRIBE *To use words that appeal to the senses in order to reveal appearance or to convey an image or impression*	• Paragraph(s) describing a real or imaginary person or place • Advertisement for a lost pet or object • Composition – describing a real or imaginary person – comparing and contrasting the same place at different times or seasons – describing a familiar place from an unusual perspective • Feature article describing a place • Classified advertisement to sell an article • Poem appealing to a single sense
V. TO PERSUADE *To change the opinion of or influence the action of the audience*	• Advertisement; commercial • Contest entry • Letter – to persuade – against an issue • Book review • Editorial • Literary analysis • Argumentative essay • Review of an event or performance • Formal speech

CHART OF EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT WRITERS K-12

The following chart indicates the focus skills or behaviors students will evidence when they have achieved the objectives (products) identified for each of the purposes of writing. The degree to which a student exhibits those behaviors serves as an indication of that student's progress toward meeting the objectives.

LEVEL I: K-3

I. TO EXPRESS SELF

To express personal feelings, reactions, values, interests, or attitudes

Products	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Sequence of sentences recounting personal feelings or reactions to an experience or event (moving from oral to written form)	• Identify the experience or event • Maintain a first-person point of view • Limit account to one experience or event • Focus on personal feelings and reactions	Students come to school with a wide range of experiences. As beginning writers, they are able to produce whole pieces of writing most easily when they tell about their feelings or reactions to those experiences. Students need these opportunities to establish a positive self-image and to enhance their self-esteem.
2. Autobiographical sketch	• Select an event • Recount event • Include personal reaction to event • Keep writer as the focus by using first-person point of view	Teachers could help students write a unified paragraph instead of a complete autobiography by suggesting such opening sentences as: The most important thing that ever happened to me was _____. I am the one who _____. I am proud of being (doing) _____.
3. Friendly letter (e.g., thank you, to pen pal, to relative or friend)	• Include adequate content • Use informal diction and tone • Use correct form and conventions, as appropriate	The letters themselves should be part of a genuine occasion and should be mailed or delivered.
4. Poem	• Use a poetic form • Use rhyming words, as appropriate • Use rhythm pattern • Use figurative language (e.g., comparison), as appropriate	Brainstorming for descriptive words and colorful action words and practicing with the poetic form chosen may be part of the prewriting activity. A good way to share the finished pieces is to have groups use them for choral readings for an audience of peers.

II. TO NARRATE

To tell a fictional story or to give an account of real events

Products	*Focus Skills—The abiity to:*	*Comments*
1. Personal narrative (moving from oral to written form)	• Include information about an actual experience or event—who, what, where, when, why, how	Students may dictate a narrative of personal experience before being able to write sentences, words, phrases, or captions. By careful questioning, teachers

	• Arrange information in chronological order	can elicit additional information and help students put incidents in order. Such questioning can be a part of the prewriting activity when students move to the written form. These narratives by the student provide exciting opportunities for practice in reading.
2. Fictional story (moving from oral to written form)	• Use a story pattern (e.g., "Once upon a time...they lived happily ever after.") • Use imaginary characters • Include correctly punctuated conversation when appropriate	Before dictating their own stories, some students may be more comfortable retelling a story using pictures in a book that is familiar to them.
3. Journal entry	• Label with a date • Record experiences, events, and observations • Include personal reactions, opinions, feelings	Journal entries are generally exploratory writing. They may be used as a prewriting activity. Kindergarten students may use drawings or invented spellings in journal entries at first; older students may begin making journal entries as a statement of an activity of the day.

III. TO EXPLAIN
To make factual information clear and understandable

Products	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Word, phrase, caption (used to label)	• Use words, phrases, captions to label pictures, objects, drawings, etc. • Use phonetic or invented spelling as needed	Oral word games promote vocabulary development at all levels. Reading, speaking, and writing skills can be enhanced by asking students to think of words to label, to describe, to use as captions for pictures. At first students may dictate the word, phrase, or caption, but later many students will begin to print or type labels and captions.
2. Sentence (moving from dictated to independently written)	• Dictate a complete sentence • Write a complete sentence from dictation • Begin a sentence with a capital letter; use correct end punctuation • Generate complete sentences orally and in writing	Students can explore the concept of a complete sentence orally before writing complete sentences. The time to introduce capitalization and end punctuation is when the students actually are writing sentences. The idea that punctuation and capitalization are an aid to the reader should be integrated with reading instruction.
3. Sentences sequenced to give directions to get from one place to another	• Use procedural markers (*first, next, then*) • Sequence actions (*go, stop, start, turn*) • Use direction markers (*left, right, up, down*) • Use distance markers (*near, far*) • Give complete information	At this level, the directions need to be simple. The idea that directions need to be sequential is the important concept. Prewriting could include students taking turns giving each other oral directions to be followed exactly in moving from one area of the classroom to another. This activity provides a good opportunity to combine speaking, listening, and writing skills.
4. Sentences sequenced to explain how to do a specific task	• Give all necessary steps in order	The concept of sequence or logical order is important. Having students take turns

	• Use procedural markers (*first, second, third, next*) • Use transitions (*and, also, or, but*) • Use precise and accurate words • Give complete information	giving oral directions for some simple activity and having other students actively carry out directions are good prewriting activities that also provide practice in speaking and listening skills. For most students at this level, the task should not involve too many steps.
5. Letter of invitation	• Give complete information • Use informal diction and tone • Use correct form and conventions	A school function such as an open house is a natural occasion for the class as a group to compose a letter of invitation from the class to parents. Such a group activity provides a model for the writing of individual letters. Birthdays and holidays are other real-life occasions for writing invitations.

IV. TO DESCRIBE
To use words that appeal to the senses in order to reveal appearance or to convey an image or impression

Products	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Words, phrases, captions	• Use words, phrases, captions that appeal to the senses in order to describe a person, animal, object, or picture	If a real animal (cat, dog, rabbit, hamster, etc.)is available for students to examine, that is ideal. If not, teachers should use a picture. Students should be asked for words that describe what they see, hear, feel, touch, smell; each word can be listed under the appropriate sense. Some students will be able to choose several words to write a sentence or two of description. Other students may be able to choose only words or phrases to label or caption their picture.
2. A sentence about a person, animal, or object (moving from dictated to independently written)	• Use a complete sentence that contains at least two words that appeal to the senses	Teachers could provide beginning writers with a sentence frame into which they can slot words they have chosen, e.g., The class pet is a _____ snake that is _____ and _____. Some students will be able to generate their own sentences.
3. Several related sentences about a person, animal, or object (moving from dictated to independently written)	• Use sensory words to convey several physical characteristics of a person, animal, or object • Use selected sensory words in complete sentences	Some possible prewriting activities include observing a particular place and taking notes, brainstorming appropriate sensory words, or drawing a picture. It may be necessary to teach or review the concept that a paragraph contains related sentences and is signaled by an indentation. Students may need help during the drafting stage in developing a logical sequence or during the revision stage in rearranging sentences to form a logical sequence.

LEVEL II: 4-6

I. TO EXPRESS SELF

To express personal feelings, reactions, values, interests, or attitudes

Products	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Paragraph(s) of personal feelings or reactions to an experience or event	• Identify the experience or event • Maintain a first-person point of view • Focus comments on personal reactions to the experience or event • Combine related sentences into paragraph(s) • Use vivid and specific language	Students need to be helped to understand the difference between telling about an experience or event (narration) and expressing their feelings about the experience or event (expressive writing). A prewriting activity could focus on words that convey emotional reactions: *I loved, hated, was surprised, was amused, was frightened,* etc.
2. Autobiographical sketch	• Select a feeling, value, attitude, etc. to serve as the focus of the sketch • Recount experience(s) related to the feeling, value, attitude, etc. • Show how the experience(s) prompted the feeling, value, attitude, etc. • Use a first-person point of view • Write a conclusion that reinforces the focus of the sketch	The autobiographical sketch would be more fully developed than the autobiographical paragraph listed in the Level I expectations. A class album, including a snapshot to accompany each sketch, is a good publication. The teacher's autobiographical sketch should also be included.
3. Journal entry	• Label with a date • Record personal reactions to experiences, events, and observations	The practice of writing in journals should continue at this level. Students should be encouraged to look back over their journals to select topics they might like to develop to the publication stage.
4. Friendly letter (e.g., congratulate, get well, share feelings about an experience)	• Use informal diction and tone • Reveal the sentiments of the writer • Address envelope • Use correct form and conventions	The occasions for the letters should be real and the letters actually mailed. Letters to absent classmates or to pen pals can be important writing activities.
5. Poem (e.g., couplet, cinquain, diamante, free verse)	• Use the conventions of the form selected • Use rhythm and rhyme as appropriate • Use figurative language • Use language with awareness of connotation/denotation • Use language playfully • Provide a title, if appropriate	Writing poetry is a pleasurable way of expressing ideas and feelings in a form that allows students opportunities to increase their ability to use language creatively.

II. TO NARRATE

To tell a fictional story or to give an account of real events

Products	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Narrative of actual experience	• Select and limit factual information related to an actual experience • Introduce the narrative with a lead that catches and excites the reader's interest	At this level, students can be expected to give more detail and use more varied sentence structure. Students can be expected to write about the experiences of others as well as about their own experiences.

	• Develop the narrative chronologically • Include correctly punctuated conversation when appropriate • Maintain a consistent point of view • Bring the narrative to a natural closure	
2. Brief short story (original or from a story starter)	• Sequence events to advance a simple plot • Create and describe characters and setting • Maintain a consistent point of view • Include correctly punctuated conversation when appropriate • Provide a title	Students may need to discuss or review the elements of stories they have read recently and possibly plan the stories they intend to write by charting the characters, the place of action (setting), the action (conflict), and the conclusion (resolution). The stories can be made into a class anthology that can be added to the classroom library with the trade books and other student authored works.
3. Fable	• Use animals as characters • Give animals human characteristics • Limit action to a specific incident • Draw a moral from the action	Prewriting includes reading selected fables and identifying characteristics that distinguish a fable from other short stories. As a group, the class might invent several morals before individual students select one. The illustrated anthology of fables could be added to the class library.
4. Folktale (e.g., "How the Leopard Got Its Spots")	• Invent an explanation for a natural phenomenon • Create and describe characters and setting • Sequence events to develop the explanation • Provide a title	Students should have the opportunity to listen to and to read folktales, such as creation tales from another culture or Kipling's "Just So Stories," as models of this type of narrative. The first attempt could be a class story. Students brainstorm questions they would like answered about natural phenomena, e.g., What causes thunder? Why do roses have thorns? Why is the sky blue? Students then select one question and as a class suggest fanciful reasons for the phenomenon. The class then develops a group narrative to explain the phenomenon. Later, students can write their own folktales individually or in small groups.
5. Skit	• Select or create a humorous situation, setting, and characters • Limit the action to the specific situation • Use dialogue to reveal characters as stereotypes or caricatures • Use dialogue to advance the action • Punctuate dialogue correctly • Build the action to a humorous, abrupt, and unexpected conclusion	Students could use the skits they have read or seen as models for their writing. The skits may then actually be performed before an audience.
6. Feature article about a person	• Identify the person • Gather information through interview(s) or research • Focus on one aspect of the person	Reading feature articles in a student newspaper or magazine and discussing their characteristics are ways of preparing for this task. The use of specific details should be stressed and revisions

	• Write a lead that introduces the human interest focus • Provide details or examples that sustain the human interest focus • Organize information • Write a conclusion that reinforces the focus of the article • Appeal to the emotions of the reader • Write a headline for the article	made to include additional details as needed to make the article more interesting or informative to the reader.

III. TO EXPLAIN
To make factual information clear and understandable

Products	*Focus Skills – The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Directions (single to multiple paragraphs)	• Use procedural markers (*first, then, next*) • Sequence actions (*start, go, stop, turn,* etc.) • Use direction and distance markers (*left, right, near, far*) • Use transitions between sentences and paragraphs • Give complete information	Simple map reading or map drawing are possible prewriting activities. A student can be asked to follow the directions to determine their accuracy and completeness.
2. How to (single to multiple paragraphs)	• Explain all necessary steps in order • Use procedural markers (*first, second, third, next*) • Use transitions (*for example, again, but, and*) • Use precise and accurate words • Give complete information	An extension of a similar activity in Level I, the task should involve a few more steps. As often as possible, the directions should concern a real-life activity, such as how to set up a science experiment, how to complete an art project, how to care for a pet, or how to maintain a bicycle.
3. Business letter of request	• State request clearly • Provide necessary information • Use diction and tone appropriate for business letter • Use acceptable business letter form	A business letter form should be introduced in the intermediate grades. The letter should be real, asking for information or free materials. Science or social studies topics lend themselves to this activity.
4. Report	• Gather information from a variety of sources (e.g., books, interviews, films, pictures, etc.) • Select information with purpose and audience in mind • Provide examples, details, etc. • Organize information • Use transitions between sentences and paragraphs • Use objective diction and tone	Subtasks involved are note taking and organizing information. Also involved are the abilities to recognize relevant information and to recognize the difference between fact and opinion. Students should have opportunities to write reports from direct observation as well as from reading.
5. News article and headline	• Begin news article with a lead that attempts to answer the who, what, when, where, why, and how questions	Note taking, using the inverted pyramid style of writing, and recognizing the difference between fact and opinion are all skills involved in writing news articles. The news article could be based on a

	• Organize information by order of importance (most to least) • Maintain a third-person point of view • Use objective diction and tone • Express main idea concisely for the headline • Use headline format (language, capitalization, placement)	school or classroom happening, a school sports incident, or content-area materials. Having students write a news article based on an incident in a fictional story they are reading is another good way to develop their understanding of the story and also to practice the news article format. Students should also provide a headline.
6. Biographical sketch based on a personal interview	• Prepare written questions for an interview • Take notes based on responses • Select relevant information • Begin with a lead that captures the essence of the person (through description, quotation, comparison, examples, characteristics, or some other quality that shows the person's uniqueness) • Organize the information • Include adequate and interesting details • Maintain a third-person point of view • Use appropriate diction and tone • End with an idea or statement that leaves the reader with a desire to know more about the person	The class could generate questions to use in an interview with a selected character from history or fiction recently studied. Next, the class could act out an interviewing session with a teacher role-playing the character and a student as the interviewer. The class should take notes during the interview. With the notes on the chalkboard, the teacher could compose the first draft on an overhead transparency, as directed by the students. The students could then revise the first draft by reordering or adding information and by composing a catchy lead and summary statement. Such preliminary modeling of a new writing task will help students gain confidence to interview and write about a real person, such as a relative, the school principal or custodian, a foreign exchange student, etc.
7. Book report	• Identify title and author • Summarize plot • Identify and describe major characters • Describe setting and establish its importance to the story • Organize the material • Express personal reaction and make recommendation	This activity involves both literal and inferential interpretation as well as evaluation skills. Students should clearly understand the difference between a plot summary and a report. The concept of supporting a generalization with appropriate detail is important. Book reports can be made more functional by publishing them, posting them in the library, filing them in a class notebook, or broadcasting them over the school PA or TV system.
8. Telegram	• Write out the message completely • Use only the most essential words to rewrite the message • Use telegram format	In order to add realism, teachers could obtain authentic telegram forms on which students could write their messages. Students could prepare a real message for a real audience or select a fictional character to receive a message.

IV. TO DESCRIBE

To use words that appeal to the senses in order to reveal appearance or to convey an image or impression

Products	*Focus Skills – The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Paragraph(s) describing a real or imaginary person or place	• Identify the person or place • Focus on sensory details which reveal	Prewriting could include listing numerous adjectives and details that describe a

	appearance or convey an image or impression of the person or place • Organize details • Use specific, vivid language • Use figurative language such as similes, as appropriate	place or friend, relative, classmate, fictional character, etc. Teachers should stress the use of vivid, specific word choices. On occasion, teachers should try this activity as a group writing exercise.
2. Advertisement for a lost pet or object	• Identify the type of pet or object • Describe physical characteristics of pet or object (e.g., size, shape, color, age, etc.) • Include other relevant details • Include "last seen" and "if found" information	This activity will encourage students to focus on the essential characteristics of a familiar object or animal and to select very specific words to describe it. Students will also need to develop the ability to discriminate between essential and incidental information. Samples of actual newspaper ads should be used as models and their contents discussed as to clarity, completeness, and brevity.

V. TO PERSUADE

To change the opinion of or influence the action of the audience

Products	*Focus Skills – The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Advertisement; commercial	• Identify the product • Describe attributes of the product most likely to appeal to the intended audience • Organize material by some pattern (e.g., compare/contrast; main idea/supporting details; cause/effect) • Use words for their connotative value • Be concise	This activity involves recognizing a product's attributes, using key descriptive terms, and using attention-getting techniques such as jingles and alliteration. The activity can lead to a persuasive paragraph. Writing an advertisement for an invented product can lead to a discussion of propaganda techniques. Performing the commercial can be a speaking/listening activity in which vocal characteristics or gestures add to the persuasiveness of the written ad.
2. Contest entry (e.g., "In 100-150 words, tell why you want to win a trip to Disneyland.")	• Understand and adhere to the requirements of the contest • Select reason(s) most likely to persuade the intended audience • Organize material to end with the strongest reason and/or persuasive appeal • Use diction and tone appropriate for contest entry • Use vivid, specific language	Contests frequently require a written response. Students could use actual contest forms and mail in their responses. School or classroom contests can be held with real prizes (e.g., books). Student judges could explain which written responses were selected as winners and could give the reasons for their choices based upon criteria established in advance by the class.
3. Letter (to persuade a friend, relative, editor, company, legislator, school official, etc.)	• State a personal opinion • Provide details, examples, and reasons in support of the opinion • Organize material • Restate opinion in a summary statement • Use diction and tone appropriate for the intended audience • Use appropriate letter form	As a prewriting activity, teachers should make a statement that is sure to generate different opinions, such as: "All students should take music lessons." Supporters of music lessons could be asked to form one group and those who oppose the statement to form another group. Teachers could direct each group to brainstorm for reasons to support its opinion. Next, each group could prepare a short speech of persuasion to be delivered by one

member. During the speeches, any person who is persuaded by a strong argument could change sides. Finally, each student could write a letter to persuade the teacher, principal, or school board member to adopt his or her opinion.

LEVEL III: 7-9

I. TO EXPRESS SELF

To express personal feelings, reactions, values, interests, or attitudes

Products	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Journal entry	• Demonstrate introspective thinking • Develop voice in recording feelings, values, attitudes, etc. • Experiment with language	A journal provides students with a place to record observations without consideration of format. Thus, it may help students overcome fear of writing or help them to become more fluent. Students should discover an honest, authentic voice here that may then transfer to their more formal writing. A journal also provides a fine place for all sorts of writing and language experiments. Entries may serve as raw material for later writing.
2. Friendly letter	• Use informal diction and tone • Include adequate content • Address envelope • Use correct form and conventions	Teachers should have students write real letters to real people for real occasions. Two teachers could set up mailboxes in their classrooms to facilitate the exchange of correspondence between their classes. In the first group of letters exchanged, students could give some autobiographical information, discussing their likes, dislikes, hobbies, etc. Pen pals could then be chosen. Students having access to word processors could set up an "electronic mailbox." Printouts of the messages could be exchanged.
3. Personal response to literature	• Identify the work or selection and its author • Select one element of the work or selection to be discussed • State reaction(s) to element selected • Provide reasons, examples, or details to support reaction(s) • Draw conclusion about the work or selection	As in Level II, the activity involves interpretation and evaluation, but the literature should be more complex. The focus should be on the student's personal feelings and reactions supported by references to the literature.
4. Poem (e.g., haiku, quatrain, ballad, free verse)	• Use the conventions of the form selected • Use sensory detail and imagery • Use figurative language, such as metaphor or simile • Be concise in expression • Use language with awareness of connotation/denotation • Provide a title, if appropriate	Students at all levels should have the opportunity to write poetry for self-expression as well as for the development of an appreciation of the power and beauty of language.

II. TO NARRATE
To tell a fictional story or to give an account of real events

Products	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Narrative of actual experience	• Select and limit factual information related to an actual experience • Begin with an interesting lead • Develop the narrative chronologically or through some other organizational plan appropriate for the experience (e.g., flashback, cause/effect) • Include details, examples, etc. • Include description and/or other information about other persons involved in the experience, when appropriate • Include correctly punctuated conversation when appropriate • Maintain a consistent first- or third-person point of view • Bring the narrative to a natural closure	Students could relate an actual experience that happened to them or someone else. Interviewing the person, if he or she is available, would be an excellent prewriting activity. Students should be encouraged to include conversation whenever possible.
2. Short story	• Sequence events to advance the plot (i.e., rising action, conflict, climax, falling action, resolution) • Create and describe character(s) and setting • Maintain a consistent point of view • Include correctly punctuated conversation • Use specific, vivid language • Suggest a theme • Provide a title	The concept of theme is added to the activity in Level III. As at Level II, students may find it helpful to make diagrams or charts of the elements as a prewriting activity. A class anthology of the stories makes a good publication and will increase student motivation.
3. Skit	• Select or create a humorous situation, setting, and characters • Limit the action to the specific situation • Use dialogue to reveal characterization • Use dialogue to advance the action • Use dialogue format • Build to a humorous, abrupt, and unexpected conclusion	Skits were introduced at Level II. Students may base their skits on an actual personal experience, an incident from a piece of literature or from history they have studied. A review of possible formats for dialogue would be helpful. The skits should be produced as a speaking/listening activity.
4. Feature article about a person or event	• Gather information about the person or event through interview(s) and/or research • Focus on the event or on one aspect of the person to be featured • Write a lead that captures the reader's interest • Provide details and support material that sustain the human interest focus • Organize the information	The skills learned during the process of writing these pieces in Level II should be reinforced and extended. Events or persons should be real, although sometimes feature articles based on characters in fiction or history are fun for students to write. Such articles also demonstrate an understanding of the content.

	• Conclude with a statement that reinforces the focus of the article • Appeal to the emotions of the reader • Write a headline	
5. Autobiographical sketch	• Limit the sketch to one experience • Begin with an interesting lead • Provide relevant details and examples • Recount events chronologically or in some other appropriate organizational pattern • Unify the writing through the use of a central idea or theme, transition words, and a natural closure • Maintain a first-person point of view • Avoid excessive subjectivity and personal reactions or emotions	Students could read and discuss personal experience narratives from *Reader's Digest* or other sources. For their own writing, students could experiment with several leads and varied organizational patterns. Students could work with partners or in small groups to get feedback.
6. Myth	• Invent an explanation of the origins of life, the deeds of supernatural creatures, or a natural phenomenon • Create superhuman or archetypal character(s) • Sequence the events to develop the explanation • Use specific, vivid language • Imply a moral or central idea, as appropriate • Include a title when appropriate	Students can write their own myths modeled on myths they have already read. These myths could be either classical or modern. Using their knowledge of various cultures studied in social studies, they could write a myth from the point of view of someone from another culture.

III. TO EXPLAIN
To make factual information clear and understandable

Products	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Essay on a process	• Select and limit the process to be explained • Explain all necessary steps in order • Use procedural markers (*first, second, next, last*) • Use appropriate transitions • Use precise and accurate words • Give complete information	This activity is an extension of a similar activity in Level II. The emphasis on the process being explained should help students focus on logical sequencing and clear, concise statements. Demonstration of a simple process accompanied by an oral explanation of the process would make an excellent modeling activity.
2. Business letter ordering merchandise	• State order clearly • Provide all necessary information • Use diction and tone appropriate for business letter • Use acceptable business letter form	Students should review business letter form(s) and conventions, noting especially the use of appropriate diction and tone and the importance of including all necessary information: size, catalog number, color, description, etc. Letters should be real, actually placing an order whenever possible.
3. Research report	• Select and limit a topic • Gather information from a variety of sources (e.g., observation, interviews,	This activity is an extension of a similar task in Level II. If interviews are used, development of the interview questions

	library research) • Include a central idea • Select information with purpose and audience in mind • Provide adequate support through examples, details, etc. • Organize information • Use appropriate transitions • Use objective diction and tone • Unify the report by concluding with an idea or statement that reinforces the central idea	and role-playing an interview are important parts of prewriting. Library skills can be reviewed and developed in connection with this activity. Students should be guided to organize the material to support the central idea with purpose and audience in mind.
4. Accident report	• Select the essential elements of the accident to be described • Eliminate extraneous details • Use an appropriate organizational plan (e.g., chronological, spatial, cause/effect) • Use specific, vivid words that demonstrate skills of observation • Use transition words when appropriate • Use objective diction and tone	Use of precise language to answer the who, what, where, when, why, and how questions is an important part of the activity. Possible audiences for this report could be an insurance company, an attorney, the police, etc. A creative and entertaining prewriting activity could be to engage students in brainstorming a class report recounting the accident that befell Jack and Jill.
5. News article	• Begin with a lead that attempts to answer the who, what, when, where, why, and how questions • Use inverted pyramid style (most important to least important) • Maintain a third-person point of view • Use objective diction and tone • Express main idea in headline format	Students should review the inverted pyramid style used in journalism. Teachers could help students select real events on which to base their reports. A class or school newspaper would be an excellent long-range project appropriate for this level.
6. Biographical report	• Gather information from a variety of sources (e.g., interviews, books, other media) • Select information with purpose and audience in mind • Begin with a lead that captures the essence of the person • Organize information in chronological order • Include adequate and interesting details • Maintain a consistent point of view • Use appropriate diction and tone • End with an idea or statement that leaves the reader with a desire to know more about the person	Prewriting involves the use of research skills such as library and media skills and interviewing. Students might try writing several leads to share with peers to discover which lead best captures the quality of the person and the interest of the reader.
7. Deductive essay	• Select or formulate a general statement • Provide appropriate and adequate support material	This activity develops the students' ability to reason logically. As a prewriting activity, teachers could introduce the con-

	• Demonstrate logical thinking in explanations • Organize by proceeding from a general statement to a specific conclusion	cept of a syllogism as a clear, concise way of proceeding from a general statement to a specific conclusion. Teachers could provide examples of deductive essays on social studies or science topics.
8. Character study based on a work of literature	• Select one character from a work of literature • Write a lead that captures the reader's interest • Limit and focus the character study to a discussion of the character's role in the plot • Include adequate and appropriate support material • Organize the material • Include a summary statement	A prewriting activity would be to brainstorm the details from the literature that reveal what the character says or does, what other characters say about that character, and what the author states or implies about the character. Keeping in mind that the focus is on the character's role in the plot, students can select and organize details that will build the character study.

IV. TO DESCRIBE
To use words that appeal to the senses in order to reveal appearance or to convey an image or impression

Products	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Composition describing a real or imaginary person	• Focus on one or more characteristics of the person • Describe characteristic(s) by choosing details that appeal to the senses • Organize the characteristics and details • Use specific, vivid language • Use similes and/or metaphors as appropriate	During the process of writing this description, students will have practice in formulating a controlling idea and using sensory detail to support the idea. During both drafting and revision, students should be helped to exercise selectivity in including, excluding, or emphasizing sensory detail.
2. Feature article describing a place	• Identify the place • Begin with an interesting lead • Describe physical characteristics by choosing details that appeal to the senses • Use an appropriate plan of organization, (e.g., spatial) • Use specific, vivid language • Create a personal or human interest tone • Use similes and/or metaphors as appropriate • Conclude with a statement that captures the essence of the place • Write a headline	Teachers should help students select a place and determine the characteristic(s) of the place that have human interest appeal. Students should be encouraged to experiment with similes and/or metaphors as a way of "painting" a description of the place selected.
3. Classified advertisement to sell an article	• Identify the article • Describe the physical characteristics of the article so that it can be identified easily • Organize the description	With the popularity of garage sales, porch sales, lawn sales, and flea markets, students may, in fact, have a real object they would like to sell. If not, teachers should select something in the

	• Include information needed by readers to respond: price, whom to contact, how to contact, etc. • Use concise language	classroom and ask students to describe it in its best light to appeal to a buyer. An imaginative ad may be written to sell an article from literature, e.g., Tom Sawyer's raft, Julius Caesar's throne, the necklace in the short story of that title.

V. TO PERSUADE
To change the opinion of or influence the action of the audience

Products	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Book review	• Identify title and author • State opinion with recommendation • Support opinion with examples, reasons, or details from the work • Organize the material • Include a summary statement	Teachers should remind students that a successful book review is designed to interest a prospective reader. Therefore, it should focus on details that illustrate why the reviewer would or would not recommend the book. However, it must avoid plot summary, since the review should not reveal so much that it spoils the story for a reader.
2. Advertisement about a new product	• Describe the new product • Explain the use of the new product • Use propaganda techniques: authority, bandwagon, testimonial, glamour, glittering generalities, etc. • Use words for their connotative value • Organize the material • Be concise	A prewriting activity that will engage thinking skills is to have small groups invent a new product and write an advertisement for that product, e.g., a homework machine. Each group could then try to use its advertisement to sell its product to the rest of the class. Some award for the most effective advertisement could stimulate interest and competition.
3. Letter to the editor against an issue	• Identify issue being opposed • Clearly state opinion • Provide supporting reasons, examples, or details • Organize material • Include a summary statement • Use respectful diction and tone • Use acceptable business letter form	When an article or editorial appears in a local or school newspaper about a highly controversial issue of concern to students, teachers should seize the opportunity to engage students in writing letters to the editor. The class could serve as an editorial board to select the most effective letters to submit to the newspaper.
4. Editorial in favor of an issue	• State opinion clearly • Provide supporting reasons, examples, or details • Organize the material • Include a summary statement • Use appropriate diction and tone	A difficult concept for students to grasp is the necessity of supporting a statement of opinion. The supporting reasons and facts should be logical and appropriate for the intended audience. Teachers should help students consider different patterns for organizing reasons.

LEVEL IV: 10-12

I. TO EXPRESS SELF
To express personal feelings, reactions, values, interests, or attitudes

Products	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Journal entry	• Analyze and record thought processes and idea development	At this level, journal entries should be used by students to record their analysis

	• Explore the basis for the feeling, value, or attitude • Exhibit voice in developing a style • Experiment with language	of thinking and feeling processes (e.g., How did I come to that conclusion? Why do I have that attitude? What is it about _____ that I value and why?). Putting these thoughts into words helps students develop a personal voice and a personal style.
2. Personal response to literature	• Identify the work or selection and author • Select and state a personal feeling, value, or attitude related to the work or selection • Select elements of the work that support or contradict a personal feeling, value, or attitude • Use examples, reasons, details to show how the selected elements support or contradict the feeling, value, or attitude • Conclude with a statement that summarizes the effect of the work or selection on the personal feeling, value, or attitude	More sophisticated interpretations of more complex literature are dealt with at this level. The focus here is on a single feeling, value, or attitude that the student has and that is supported by or contradicted by the work or selection. Specific details should be selected from the work as evidence of the support or contradiction.
3. Poem (e.g., blank verse, sonnet)	• Use the conventions of the form selected • Use imagery and sensory detail • Be concise in expression • Use language with awareness of connotation/denotation • Use figurative language, such as metaphor, simile, hyperbole, personification, oxymoron, pun • Provide a title	Students at all levels should be encouraged to write poetry to develop their sense of the power and beauty of language. The discipline of using a form that they have studied enhances appreciation of both the structure and flexibility of language.

II. TO NARRATE

To tell a fictional story or to give an account of real events

Products	*Focus Skills – The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Short story with an ironic or surprise ending	• Sequence events to advance the plot and lead to an ironic or surprise ending • Create and describe the characters and setting • Maintain a consistent point of view • Include correctly punctuated conversation • Use specific, vivid language • Suggest a theme • Provide a title	Teachers should have the students read "The Necklace," "Gift of the Magi," "A Rose for Emily," "All Summer in a Day," or other short stories with a surprise or ironic ending. Using one of the stories as a model, teachers should discuss with the students how the author achieved the surprise or ironic ending so students can recognize some generalizations appropriate to this type of short story. Teachers should also discuss how the ending helps convey the theme. Working in pairs or small groups, students could decide upon their ending first, then develop the plot structure that leads to the desired ending.

2. Script (e.g., skit, scene, play)	• Limit the action • Use dialogue to reveal characterization and to advance the action • Use the structure and conventions of the selected dramatic form (skit, scene, play) • Include stage directions when appropriate • Use dialogue format • Suggest a theme or central idea	Students can work together in small groups to develop characters and construct plots. As part of the prewriting, students should sketch out personality and biographical details of their characters in order to keep the dialogue consistent with the nature of the characters. The scripts should be performed.
3. Script adapted from a work of literature	• Select and limit the elements to be included in the dramatization: characters, plot, setting • Use and/or create dialogue to reveal characterization and to advance the action • Use the structure and conventions of the selected dramatic form (e.g., stage script, TV script) • Include stage directions • Use dialogue format • Maintain the original intent of the work of literature	One way to introduce students to script writing is to choose a familiar short story, divide it into segments, and assign one segment to each of several groups of students. Each group could be asked to adapt its segment into script form so that the entire short story can be dramatized.
4. Humorous newspaper column	• Create or recount an event or idea • Write a lead that captures the reader's interest • Develop the topic with adequate and appropriate details • Organize the information • Achieve a humorous effect through the use of parody, satire, exaggeration, etc. • Conclude with an idea or statement that reinforces the humorous tone	One effective prewriting activity is to examine the columns of several humorous writers (e.g., Bombeck, Buchwald, Baker). The class is divided into groups, and each group chooses a columnist. Each group should analyze the writer's style and write its own column, attempting to imitate the style, organization, and tone of its chosen writer. These columns could be read aloud to the whole class and/or published in the school newspaper. Individual writing efforts might follow this group activity.

III. TO EXPLAIN
To make factual information clear and understandable

Products	*Focus Skills – The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Series of news articles on one topic or issue	• Begin with leads that attempt to answer who, what, when, where, why, and how questions • Use inverted pyramid style (most important to least important) • Present in each article an update of information on the topic or a different viewpoint on the topic	This activity provides students with the opportunity to follow through on a news story. Students are required to look at the story from a series of differing viewpoints or to update a news story with additional information.

	• Use objective diction and tone • Express main ideas in headlines	
2. Business letter of complaint	• State complaint/situation clearly • Provide all necessary information • State the action desired • Use diction and tone appropriate for business letter • Use acceptable business letter form	Students should review business letter form(s). It is especially important in this activity that students state the complaint and the desired action and that they use diction and tone that is forceful but not aggressive.
3. Research paper (e.g., term paper, multiple source paper, reference paper)	• Select and limit a topic • Refer to authoritative sources • Use primary sources whenever possible • Include most recent sources • Provide a central idea • Select, organize, and integrate material • Use information accurately • Use complete documentation in correct format (e.g., footnotes, bibliography) • Present information in an objective manner • Present the information with some originality and/or insight • Include a summary or conclusion • Avoid plagiarism	The process of writing this paper should help students develop their research skills by using both primary and secondary sources. Prewriting will include organizing material from various sources. Students will need to review or learn appropriate documentation for the sources.
4. Formal essay	• Make a clear thesis statement • Consider the audience's prior knowledge about topic • Develop thesis statement with appropriate reasons, examples, or details • Use a suitable organization pattern (e.g., cause/effect, compare/contrast, classification, definition, enumeration or examples, chronological order, spatial order, induction, deduction, whole to part, question/answer, parallelism) • Use appropriate transitions • Use formal diction and tone • Maintain coherence and unity • Make a concluding statement that reiterates the thesis statement	This essay is distinguished by a highly formal diction and tone. Examining models helps as a prewriting activity. Teachers could prepare several essays from which the thesis statement and concluding statements have been removed. Students could supply possible thesis statements and concluding statements and then compare them with the originals.
5. Character study based on a work of literature	• Select one character from a work of literature • Write a lead that states the significance of the character either as a "type" or "individual" • Focus discussion on the character's nature as developed in the work rather	The character selected by the student should be analyzed, not simply described. The analysis should focus on what makes this character unique or what makes the character a stereotype, archetype, etc. Students might approach this analysis by freewriting their impressions of a character who interests them,

	than on a physical description of the character • Include adequate and appropriate support material • Organize the material • Use specific, vivid language • Include a summary statement	then formulating questions that they need to answer to show the nature and significance of the character.
6. Précis	• Relate the essence of a passage or work • Omit details, reasons, examples, etc. • Avoid using the wording of the original work • Use clear and concise language • Write no more than 1/3 the length of the original • Maintain the author's point of view	This activity is a combination of reading and writing skills, since the major idea must be identified and then summarized and paraphrased. Students should make sure the original point of view is maintained.
7. Letter of application	• Indicate the position desired • Use the conventions of a letter of application (e.g., refer to how the applicant learned of the position, refer to an enclosed résumé, include availability for interview) • Highlight personal qualities and experiences relevant to the desired position • Organize the content • Use precise and accurate language • Be concise • Use diction and tone appropriate for a letter of application • Use acceptable business letter form	This task involves using the business letter form to present information about the student in a clear and persuasive fashion to "sell oneself." It is especially important to emphasize what will most appeal to the employer.
8. Résumé	• Use the conventions of a résumé (i.e., personal information, educational background, work experience, and references) • Be concise • Exclude irrelevant information	Teachers could provide several different résumé forms that have been completed. Students should compare the forms to determine the essential elements and characteristics and how they can best be organized.

IV. TO DESCRIBE

To use words that appeal to the senses in order to reveal appearance or to convey an image or impression

Products	*Focus Skills – The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Composition comparing and contrasting the same place at different times or seasons	• Decide on the place to be described • Decide on the organizational pattern to be used (e.g., alternating – A/B, A/B, A/B or complementary – all A, then all B) • Provide a central idea • Begin with an interesting lead • Describe physical characteristics by	Teachers could model this activity by using a photograph of the same place in two seasons. They could also ask students to take notes about a real place, e.g., their room, a favorite spot, or a part of the school at two different times. This is a good time to encourage the use of similes, metaphors, or other figurative language.

	choosing details that appeal to the senses • Use specific, vivid language • Use figurative language as appropriate • Bring the description to a natural closure	
2. Composition describing a familiar place from an unusual perspective	• Select the unusual perspective to be used (e.g., describe locker from the perspective of a sneaker, classroom from the perspective of a blackboard, park from the perspective of a tree, etc.) • Begin with an interesting lead • Use details that sustain the unusual perspective • Use specific, vivid language • Use figurative language as appropriate • Use a pattern of organization • Maintain the unusual perspective throughout • Bring the description to a natural closure	This activity is designed to change students' usual way of perceiving reality and thus heighten the powers of observation. Students should be encouraged to use all senses and to be playful with the language.
3. Poem appealing to a single sense	• Select what will be described • Determine to which sense the description will most appeal • Sustain the description through use of details that appeal to that sense • Use language with awareness of connotation and denotation • Use specific, vivid language • Use poetic devices (e.g., figurative language, rhyme, rhythm, alliteration) • Include a title	This is a sophisticated activity that requires a careful selection of details to maintain consistency in the appeal to one sense. A good prewriting activity would be the clustering or webbing of appropriate words around the sense selected.

V. TO PERSUADE
To change the opinion of or influence the action of the audience

Products	*Focus Skills – The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Editorial	• State an opinion clearly • Provide supporting reasons, examples, or details • Demonstrate higher-level thinking and reasoning (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) • Organize the material • Include a summary statement • Use appropriate diction and tone	Political, social, or environmental issues could be the impetus for this activity. Students selecting similar topics or issues could meet to discuss the topic or issue as a way of clarifying and expanding their thinking.
2. Literary analysis	• Identify title and author • Select a single focus: interpretation of the theme; effect(s) on the reader; historical significance;	Teachers should help students apply the higher-level cognitive skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation that are necessary in this kind of writing. They should

	character(s); influence of setting, symbols, etc. • State clearly the position or central idea to be developed • Support the position or central idea with examples, reasons, details • Acknowledge opposing position but include reasons for discounting it, as appropriate • Organize the material • Include a summary statement	lead the students in writing a class analysis of a short story or novel just studied. Such a group activity will effectively demonstrate the process required to analyze a literary work.
3. Argumentative essay	• State an opinion clearly • Provide reasons, examples, and details as evidence of the validity of the opinion • Indicate flaws in opposing viewpoint(s) • Organize the material (e.g., classification, cause/effect, definition, compare/ contrast) • Use appropriate transitions • Include a summary statement	The emphasis should be on using logic and facts to argue clearly and forcefully for a given position. In addition, students should be taught how to refute an opposing viewpoint.
4. Review of an event or performance	• Identify the event or performance • Begin with an interesting lead that clearly states an opinion of the event or performance • Organize the material by discussing the essential elements of the performance or event and the impact on the audience • Support opinion with appropriate details • Make a recommendation and suggest an appropriate audience for the performance or event	Reading sample reviews of plays, musicals, concerts, or sports events is an excellent prewriting activity. Students should analyze the strong and weak elements of the review: Did the review help me decide whether or not to attend the event? Do I have questions that were not answered? Did the reviewer include enough information? Was all the information relevant?
5. Formal speech	• Consider the prior knowledge, interests, and attitudes of the audience • Include a salutation as appropriate • State clearly the desired action • Provide supporting reasons, examples, and details • Organize the material • Restate the desired action • Use appropriate diction and tone	Speakers rarely deliver a word-for-word reading of a prepared speech. There are, however, occasions when a formal speech is appropriate. Practice in the preparation and delivery of a formal speech will increase students' awareness of this special form and its conventions. The speech should be delivered, if possible.

EVALUATION OF SKILLS IN COMPOSITION

Evaluation has a great influence on students' actions and attitudes toward writing as well as on teachers' actions and attitudes toward the teaching of writing. Therefore, evaluation practices not only need to be helpful to students' development as writers but also need to be manageable from the standpoint of teachers' workloads.

Grading should be de-emphasized and delayed as long as possible in the composing process. Everything students write need not be graded. However, the students' writing needs to be responded to in some way that will lead to improvement.

Both teachers and students should clearly understand what is being evaluated and on what basis. Evaluators, whether they are teachers or students, need to be objective yet sensitive and insightful readers. Because writing is an expressive and frequently risk-taking activity, the best response is one that is supportive yet honest.

Purposes of Evaluation

Some of the purposes for evaluating student writing are to:

- show students where improvements can be made; for example, adding or deleting ideas pertinent to their writing
- give students recognition for good work
- keep a running account of the students' progress during the school year and show students the progress they have made
- diagnose problems in order to prescribe a suitable program for those students with special writing needs
- train students to evaluate their own or a classmate's work in a constructive and supportive manner
- establish classroom groups based on similar abilities or needs identified by some form of evaluation
- find out if the students understood the specific task, the purpose, and the audience previously established for the assignment
- assess the success of a particular lesson
- assess the writing program of the school.

Methods of Evaluation

Evaluation should be a positive learning experience and viewed as part of the writing process. Some effective methods of evaluation are:

- ***Teacher-Student Conference*** – Conferencing is usually most effective during the prewriting and drafting stages, but it can have some value even in the post-writing stage.

  Conferences do not have to be complex, lengthy events. A minute or two may be enough time to give a student positive feedback as well as some suggestions for improvement. Obviously, depending on the purpose and type of evaluation, some conferences will be of greater length and depth.

- ***Group Evaluation*** – Student writing can be projected on a screen by using an opaque projector, and the class can offer constructive criticism for each paper, referring to an evaluation checklist that has been provided.
- ***Peer Evaluation*** – Students can evaluate each other's work for a variety of purposes. Peer-group work should begin early in the school year and be carefully guided and structured by the teacher.
- ***Comment Feedback*** – Instead of grading pieces of writing, teachers write comments about students' papers, emphasizing such things as style, organization, ideas, sentence variety, or use of description. Students then revise their work, keeping in mind the suggestions made by the teacher.
- ***Evaluation Checklist*** – Checklists can be used by the whole class during group evaluation, by individuals for self-evaluation, and by pairs of students for evaluation of each other's work. A checklist helps the student and teacher focus on what is being evaluated. It also lets the student know ahead of time what the objectives are for a specific assignment.
- ***Evaluation of Editing Errors*** – Evaluating editing errors (punctuation, capitalization, spelling, etc.) is done most effectively when teachers let students correct their own mistakes. This method helps make the students, not the teachers, responsible for editing and eventually makes them more independent writers.
- ***Analytic Evaluation***
  - Student's Writing Process

    In evaluating a student's work, teachers might

well analyze the student's way of working as well as the work itself. For example, teachers can determine if the student is able to analyze the key elements of the task, how much time the student spends planning and thinking about the piece before writing, the use the student makes of planning and thinking time, and whether the student makes suggested revisions or merely copies over earlier work.

- Student's Writing Product

Analyzing the written product also gives teachers information to use in instructing a student. For example, a paper might be analyzed for organization and development of content, attention to purpose and audience, word choice, clarity, spelling, and mechanics. Teachers can then decide which aspect needs attention first.

- ***Primary Trait Scoring*** – This procedure can be used to determine if a class is weak in a certain area or if instruction has been effective. Students are given a specific task to accomplish; e.g., description. Evaluation of that particular assignment is then based primarily on the correct use of descriptive words.

- ***Holistic Scoring*** – Rather than judging separate features (content, organization, mechanics, etc.), holistic scoring judges the quality of the paper as a whole. It is the most practical means of evaluating large numbers of papers such as a school-wide or district-wide collection of writing samples or the State writing tests.

  Holistic scoring may be either norm referenced or criterion referenced. If the scoring is norm referenced, the papers are rated in relation to all the papers in that particular sample; in other words, each rater selects the best papers in the particular sample for the highest score, the worst for the lowest, and so on. A student's work is compared to the other pieces written for the assignment at the same time. For criterion-referenced scoring, a standard is established, and the papers are rated in comparison to the standard, not in relation to each other. (See the manuals for the New York State writing tests.)

  Holistic scoring is a practical and efficient way of rating papers in order to evaluate a school or district writing program. It also indicates which students need extra help to develop their writing abilities, whether their work falls into the lowest group in a norm-referenced test or below a certain point in a criterion-referenced test. However, holistic scoring does not tell teachers in which aspects of composition an individual student is strong or weak. For that purpose, one of the other types of evaluation must be used.

- ***Cumulative Folders*** – Folders should contain samples of students' best writing for a year or over several years. They serve as tangible evidence of the students' progress and are one of the best vehicles for long-range program evaluation.

Regardless of the method of evaluation chosen, students should understand that improvement takes time and practice. Dramatic improvements, rarely made within a semester's time, are seldom made without writing many types of products for different purposes and different audiences.

Teachers of some students with handicapping conditions may need to use alternative testing procedures to allow those students to demonstrate mastery of skills and attainment of knowledge on an equal basis with their peers. Additional information on the use of alternative testing techniques appears in Appendix E, *Students with Handicapping Conditions*. It is also important to choose appropriate types of evaluation for those students with handicapping conditions who are placed within regular education. It will be important to maintain continuous communication with teachers of special education who are also involved with the students' educational program.

More detailed suggestions and explanations of evaluation methods will be found in *Composition in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*.

READING AND LITERATURE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM

Reading is an active, comprehension-centered process. It requires constructing, evaluating, and elaborating upon ideas and information derived from text in light of the reader's prior knowledge and experience and the context in which the reading occurs. Using information in the text and expectations arising from experience, skillful readers collect evidence about the possible meanings in the text as they read. They draw simultaneously on their knowledge about letters, words, sentences, and concepts. They know when the reading doesn't make sense and when to correct and refine their interpretations. Teachers who promote reading as a constructive, selective, and strategic process help their students to plan, monitor, respond to, reflect on, and apply their reading.

From prereading to application, students in a process-oriented classroom learn to view reading as a search for meaning.

From prereading to application, students in a process-oriented classroom learn to view reading as a search for meaning. Process-oriented reading programs encourage students to read a variety of materials for specific purposes, both in the English language arts program and in all content areas where reading is used to learn. Effective reading programs enable students to read for information, to respond personally to content, and to form judgments about that content.

Literature (fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry) provides the content for a process-oriented reading program, offering limitless opportunities for making connections between language and experience. Literature nurtures the imagination, provides vicarious experiences, promotes insight into human behavior, and makes students aware of the universal nature of human experience. Through literature, students can learn to appreciate their own heritage, respect the heritage of others, and become aware of stereotypes based on race, religion, ethnicity, disability, and gender.

Skills not only in reading but in writing, listening, and speaking can be developed through literature. Literature does not exist without language and, indeed, provides models of the exemplary use of language. Literature read aloud or performed heightens students' awareness of the power and beauty of language. Reading and listening to literature stimulate writing and provide students with models of the writer's craft.

The teacher's art lies in helping students to recognize that literature is communication and to respond to that communication. Literary analysis is taught for its value in evoking that personal response; it is not taught as an end in itself.

In the process-oriented classroom, the basal reader or anthology is not the only source of literature.

In the process-oriented classroom, the basal reader or anthology is not the only source of literature. Either may be useful for introducing students to a new author or genre, for suggesting a theme or a structure for the program, or for providing a common text for group instruction. However, a complete and effective English language arts curriculum will include all of the literary forms and genres listed in the chart beginning on page 73. Some students with handicapping conditions who have difficulty deriving meaning from printed material may benefit from the use of audiotapes of books, which should be accessible as needed. Only by having numerous encounters with books can students be expected to move from delight in the experience to an awareness of, and appreciation for, quality literature.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT READERS K-12

Just as the Listening and Speaking strand is organized around the purposes for listening and speaking, and the Composition strand is organized around the purposes for writing, the Reading and Literature component has as its organizing framework three broad purposes for reading:

- reading for aesthetic and personal response
- reading for acquisition, interpretation, and application of information
- reading for critical analysis and evaluation.

While these three purposes are presented as distinct categories, they are inseparable elements of the reading process. To become effective readers, students need to learn strategies for acquiring, interpreting, and applying information, while also learning how to respond personally to content and how to form judgments about that content.

For each purpose for reading, a number of expected instructional outcomes in the form of objectives have been identified. The objectives are stated in terms of what an effective reader will be able to do in order to fulfill the general purposes for reading.

For each objective listed, a number of focus skills are also identified. Focus skills are those abilities that students will evidence when the objective is achieved. This list of skills differs from traditional lists in that the skills on this list are related to particular purposes for reading, thereby suggesting an optimum time for instruction or reinforcement. Focus skills may also serve as criteria for evaluation; if students are able to demonstrate the skills related to a particular objective, they have achieved that objective.

To differentiate instruction by grade or ability level, teachers would vary the reading material and the cognitive demands of the task according to the ages, interests, and developmental stages of the learners.

As noted on pages 17 and 18, grade-level designations have not been assigned to objectives or focus skills because current theory views reading as a process, not an orderly sequence of separate skills. "Reading, like playing a musical instrument, is not something that is mastered once and for all at a certain age. Rather, it is a skill that continues to improve through practice. . .the most useful form of practice is doing the whole skill of reading – that is, reading meaningful text for the purpose of understanding the message it contains." (*Becoming a Nation of Readers*, 1984). Readers become more skillful when they have more personal control over the process. When students are taught to plan their approach to reading, apply strategies that foster learning, evaluate what they read, remember the content, and apply their new knowledge, they are on their way to taking charge of their own learning. A description of the reading process and suggestions for teaching and adapting selected comprehension strategies are included in *Reading and Literature in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*.

OVERVIEW OF PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES FOR READING AND LITERATURE K-12

Purposes	*Objectives—The student will:*
I. READING FOR AESTHETIC AND PERSONAL RESPONSE *Enjoying and appreciating text, relating text to self, developing sensitivity to diverse social, historical, and cultural dimensions*	1. Experience vicariously the situations and events in a selection 2. Understand and appreciate the personal, social, cultural, and historical significance of a selection 3. Respond creatively to written selections 4. Examine ways the author uses language and text characteristics to evoke a response in the reader
II. READING FOR ACQUISITION, INTERPRETATION, AND APPLICATION OF INFORMATION *Collecting data, facts, or ideas; discovering relationships, concepts, or generalizations; using knowledge generated from text*	1. Engage in individual or collaborative planning activities 2. Identify, collect, or select information 3. Synthesize and organize information and discover related ideas 4. Apply, extend, and expand on information and concepts 5. Examine ways in which the author uses language and text characteristics to aid comprehension 6. Monitor the processes for acquiring, understanding, and remembering information
III. READING FOR CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION *Using personal or objective criteria to form opinions or to make judgments about ideas and information*	1. Assess the validity and accuracy of information in a selection 2. Determine the value of information and ideas 3. Evaluate the quality of the selection 4. Apply criteria for evaluating informational, persuasive, and literary materials

CHART OF EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT READERS K-12

The following chart indicates the focus skills or behaviors students will evidence when they have achieved the objectives identified for each of the purposes for reading. The degree to which a student exhibits those behaviors serves as an indication of that student's progress toward meeting the objectives.

I. READING FOR AESTHETIC AND PERSONAL RESPONSE
Enjoying and appreciating text, relating text to self, developing sensitivity to diverse social, historical, and cultural dimensions

Objectives—The student will:	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Experience vicariously the situations and events in a selection	• Express appropriate emotional reactions to the selection • Identify elements of the selection that evoke response (e.g., interest, amusement, sorrow, regret) • Relate plot, setting, theme, characters to own experiences, feelings, and behaviors • Respond to the sensory, emotional, and descriptive power of the language and content	Teachers who love books and who share personal reactions to the characters, events, and language of a selection will inspire students to do likewise. Frequent opportunities should be provided for students to engage in dialogue and to respond to such questions as: • How did (incident) make you feel? • What would you have done in this situation? • If the character had behaved differently, what might have been the outcome? Small-group discussion can serve to elicit students' shared experiences and to affirm their views as well as to open up other possibilities for thinking about and interpreting a selection.
2. Understand and appreciate the personal, social, cultural, and historical significance of a selection	• Recognize a selection as a reflection of its social, cultural, and historical context • Associate personal values and beliefs with the content of a selection • Consider a selection in light of situations, conflicts, and themes common to human experience • Demonstrate respect for individuals, cultures, and customs reflected in a selection	Books students read can serve as reflections of their own lives as well as windows on the lives of others. The teacher's role is to lead students to explore the relationships between personal experiences and larger social and cultural issues. A thematic approach can bring shape to a variety of concepts such as family, friendship, justice, or those suggested by the New York State social studies curriculum (e.g., identity, change, technology). Historical fiction and biography, in particular, enable students to see history as an account of the lives and events of real people as well as a source of insight into human behavior, human conditions, and human values.
3. Respond creatively to written selections	• Participate effectively in the oral interpretation of a selection	The curriculum should include activities such as oral reading of poetry and plays,

	• Make relevant, logical, coherent contributions to discussion • Create a product that effectively demonstrates a personal response to a selection	choral reading, storytelling, and role playing, which inspire personal interpretation, demonstrate the power of language, and provide a vehicle for incorporating other language arts. Other ways of encouraging creative interpretation are: • original artwork, such as sketches and drawings, paintings, sculpture, models, and dioramas • music or dance interpretation • personal writing, such as critiques, reviews, or analyses of stories, poems, or essays Teachers must be careful, however, not to minimize the value of the reading itself by spending too much time on extended activities.
4. Examine ways the author uses language and text characteristics to evoke a response in the reader	• Consider the varied, connotative, or symbolic meanings of words used by the author • Consider ways the author uses language to bring characters to life, enhance plot development, or create a mood • Consider the effects of rhythm, rhyme, repetition, sensory imagery, and figurative language in evoking an emotional response • Consider the effect of the author's use of idiom, dialect, colloquialisms, and regionalisms • Consider the influence of the overall pattern of organization or story structure on the reader's response	In order to appreciate fully an author's craft, students need exposure to a variety of writing styles from a broad range of literature. Reading aloud, imitating models (as in pattern writing), writing plays, and manipulating poetic elements (rhyme, rhythm, sound patterns, shape, repetition, imagery) all serve to heighten awareness of language and its effect on the reader. Interviews with published writers, participation in writer-in-residence programs, and frequent discussion of students' own writing are also useful activities for helping students to view reading "with a writer's eye."

II. READING FOR ACQUISITION, INTERPRETATION, AND APPLICATION OF INFORMATION

Collecting data, facts, or ideas; discovering relationships, concepts, or generalizations; using knowledge generated from text

Objectives—The student will:	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Engage in individual or collaborative planning activities	• Establish personal goals for reading • Analyze assigned task • Preview text to anticipate content and organization • Use title, chapter headings, illustrations, or graphic aids to predict content • Recall prior knowledge and personal experiences related to topic • Generate key words or concepts likely to be found in the reading	Planning activities can help students set purposes, establish expectations, raise questions, or create a mood. They also let students know they have a wide range of experiences to relate to reading. In moving from teacher-directed to self-directed strategies, students will be given opportunities to observe teachers modeling planning activities, to plan together in small groups, and to engage in individual planning tasks. For students to become effective at reading for information, materials used must evoke interest

	• Generate questions to be answered from the reading	and curiosity and be organized and presented in a manner that facilitates learning.
2. Identify, collect, or select information	• Identify key words and discover their meanings • Identify the story structure or organizational patterns of the text • Recognize details and concepts related to prior predictions and questions • Record or mentally note important information	Content-area materials use organizational patterns that can assist students in anticipating and retrieving significant ideas. If, for example, students recognize the signals of a cause-effect pattern, they will be better able to relate actions and events to outcomes. Rather than merely requiring labels for organizational patterns, tasks should connect structure to the content of the passage; e.g., • List all the things that cause ocean currents. • Underline all the words that name the parts of the beetle. • Find the words that tell about the effects of the tides.
3. Synthesize and organize information and discover related ideas	• Condense, combine, or categorize information • Create an organizational framework for retaining information • Form generalizations based on new information	This phase of a reading lesson is well suited to group activities. Students at all levels can cluster and label information; complete a web, semantic map, or structured overview; or respond to problems that require use of the new information. Students should be encouraged to make inferences and to offer personal ideas that go beyond the information in the text.
4. Apply, extend, and expand on information and concepts	• Use information from text to clarify or refine understanding of historical or contemporary issues or events • Solve problems or make decisions based on interpretation of information • Follow directions to create a product or develop an original idea based on interpretation of information	Questions and discussion that encourage application of new ideas and information help students to relate their out-of-school experiences to what they are learning in school. Knowledge from text can be applied in a number of ways, from following written directions (as in a recipe) to responding creatively through play, talk, writing, or art forms. Creative responses to reading require a stimulating environment, challenging and imaginative tasks, and an accepting, enthusiastic attitude on the part of the teacher.
5. Examine ways in which the author uses language and text characteristics to aid comprehension	• Identify ways the author defines and develops words and concepts • Analyze effects of word choice, sentence structure, and text organization on comprehensibility • Recognize the usefulness of text aids such as headings, captions, titles, and illustrative material	One way of helping students to appreciate the importance of clarity and organization in text is to ask questions about students' personal writing or class-developed experience stories; e.g.: • How does Jennifer help you to picture the sailboat race? • In what ways do the order of Mary's sentences help us to learn how maple syrup is made? • In what ways does Julio define "muscle cars"?

- How might John's report have been different if he had used a cause- effect pattern?

Questions such as these lay the groundwork for clarifying the author's message in commercially published materials.

6. Monitor the processes for acquiring, understanding, and remembering information

- Recall purposes for reading
- Determine the degree to which the new information makes sense
- Anticipate and analyze obstacles to understanding
- Apply strategies for dealing with obstacles to understanding
- Determine ways to recall or retrieve ideas and information
- Assess the effectiveness of strategies used in learning from text

When students are given opportunities to reflect on their own learning behaviors and outcomes, their strategies for learning from text will improve. They might meet in small groups before beginning a reading assignment to analyze the task, clarify the purpose, predict difficulties, and plan ways to approach the material. They might interview teachers and peers about their study strategies and discuss the results. They could record information in various forms (e.g., chart, outline, structured overview, summary) and note the advantages and limitations of each. Or they might use individual reflection guides in which they respond to such post- reading questions as:

- What information was new to me?
- What didn't I understand?
- How will I organize the information in order to remember it?

III. READING FOR CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION
Using personal or objective criteria to form opinions or to make judgments about ideas and information

Objectives—The student will:	*Focus Skills—The ability to:*	*Comments*
1. Assess the validity and accuracy of information in a selection	• Distinguish between vague and precise words • Distinguish between statements of fact and statements of opinion • Make judgments about the truthfulness and verifiability of information • Identify faulty reasoning • Evaluate the appropriateness of persuasive techniques • Evaluate the reliability of a source	Students of all ages can be given opportunities to verify information by: • relating prior knowledge to a new topic (e.g., the growth of mold on bread to the discovery of penicillin) • checking other sources (e.g., comparing two books or articles on the same topic) • interviewing an expert (e.g., a firefighter on fire safety) • direct observation (e.g., visiting an airport after learning about air transportation) Students learn to evaluate information and its sources most effectively when they are given opportunities to explore a variety of materials beyond the content-area textbook. Encouraging them to read related fiction and specialized trade books serves to broaden both their knowledge base and their exposure to quality literature.

2. Determine the value of information and ideas	• Assess scope, comprehensiveness, and significance of information or ideas • Determine practicality and usefulness of information or ideas in light of purposes for reading	Learning to assess the value of information and ideas from text begins with the expectation that the reading will be significant and useful. Students should be encouraged to ask prereading questions that focus on significance and usefulness, such as: • Why is this important? • How will I use this information? • How does this topic relate to what I have been studying? Following the reading, students may then be asked to recall their questions and predictions to see if their expectations were met by the reading. Subsequent discussion may reveal limitations of the text or the need to consult other sources. Such reflection also helps students realize that the value of information and ideas is at least partly determined by their own purposes for reading.
3. Evaluate the quality of the selection	• Make judgments about the clarity, power, and authenticity of a selection • Evaluate the effectiveness of the author's development of plot, theme, setting, and characterization • Determine how the author's point of view, tone, and style affect the reader's judgment of the material • Identify and evaluate the author's use of language patterns and literary devices such as figurative language, dialogue, and symbolism • Appreciate the attributes of various literary forms and genres • Evaluate the effectiveness of a selection in comparison with others of its kind	One way of alerting students to the author's craft as they read is to use a guide which flags figurative language, identifies literary devices, and poses questions to focus the reading. Students are given a prepared list of questions, suggestions, statements, definitions, or admonitions such as: • Why do you think the author chose to write in the first person? • Think about what makes this passage difficult to understand. • This poem is written in blank verse, a form that uses rhythm but not rhyme. • *Lift* is a British term for *elevator*. • Be careful here; this metaphor may suggest more than one interpretation. Study guides may be particularly helpful to students with handicapping conditions for calling attention to the author's use of language and literary devices. Because the purpose of this procedure is to call attention to elements that students should attend to independently, it may be helpful for some students to construct their own study guides for use by their peers.
4. Apply criteria for evaluating informational, persuasive, and literary material	• Relate personal values to values expressed in the material • Select, reject, and reconcile information and ideas in light of prior knowledge, experiences, and beliefs	For students to make judgments about the quality of what they read, they need many opportunities to compare and contrast examples of informational, persuasive, and literary materials. For example, students might be asked to:

- Develop personal criteria for making judgments about the quality, relevance, and importance of the material
- Determine the literary merit of a selection in terms of its timeliness and timelessness
- Read several selections by the same author (e.g., O'Henry, Katherine Patterson, Jack Prelutsky) and develop a chart for classifying and describing their similarities and differences
- Read several books on a common theme (e.g., snow, bears, friendship, journeys, courage) and compare treatments
- Survey classmates for their favorite books and determine criteria for selection
- List books they feel everyone should read and give reasons for their choices
- Examine material from different sources on the same topic (e.g., the social studies text and a travel guide on the Caribbean Islands)

Modeling by the teacher is helpful as well, particularly in persuading students to move from one kind of reading to another (e.g., "You might like to read *Julie and the Wolves*. It reminds me of Marguerite Henry's books about horses and the characters' loyalty and devotion to their animals.").

CONTENT OF A READING AND LITERATURE PROGRAM K-12*

A balanced reading and literature program requires that students experience a variety of literary forms and genres. The chart that follows suggests many opportunities for helping students gain independence in reading for aesthetic and personal response, for information, and for critical analysis and evaluation.

FICTION

Text	*Distinguishing Features*	*Comments*
1. Picture books (Mother Goose, ABC and counting books, toy books, concept books, wordless books, pattern books, easy-to-read books)	• Plots are simple, fast-paced, predictable. • Characters and their actions appeal to young children. • Illustrations contribute to story line. • Rhyme, repetition, refrain encourage reading aloud. • Story and language appeal to sense of humor through word play, nonsense, surprise, exaggeration. • Illustrations encourage participation through naming, pointing, seeking.	Picture books provide pleasure for beginning readers, familiarize them with the language of books, and enhance understanding of concepts and abstract ideas. Picture books can also be used with advanced readers to introduce story structure, allegory, characterization, or the effects of certain literary devices.
2. Traditional literature Folktales	• Time and place are generic (e.g., "Once upon a time in a faraway castle. . .") • Stories are not intended to be accepted as true. • Plots use predictable motifs (ogres, magic, supernatural helpers, quests). • Story line is frequently a series of recurring actions. • Characters are one-dimensional.	Traditional literature continues the oral tradition and reveals the values and beliefs of a culture. It provides opportunities for discussing human problems and solutions, morals and values, and the contributions of different cultures to our own society. Folklore is a natural source of material for storytelling, creative dramatics, creative writing, and artistic interpretation.
Myths	• Stories are seen as true in the represented society. • Plots are usually associated with theology or ritual. • Accounts frequently explain natural phenomena.	
Fables	• Tales concern human conduct with moralistic overtones. • Animals exhibit human qualities and behaviors.	

* The information in this chart is adapted from the following:

D.Norton, *Through the Eyes of a Child*, Charles E.Merrill Publishing Co., 1983.
C.Huck, *Children's Literature in the Elementary School*, Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1982.
B.Cullinan, *Literature and the Child*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1981.

Legends	• Plots record deeds of past heroes. • Stories are presented as true. • Stories are usually secular and associated with wars and victories.	
Epic literature	• Long narratives detail the adventures of a single heroic figure. • The center of action revolves around the relationship between the heroic figure and the gods. • The main character symbolizes the ideal characteristics of greatness. • Many were originally written as poetry or songs. • Language is lyrical, stately, and rich with images.	
3. Fantasy and science fiction	• Characters or settings depart from what is realistic or expected. • The author makes the impossible believable through logical framework and consistency, characters' acceptance of the fanciful, and use of appropriate language. • Characters include humanized animals, good and evil stereotypes, eccentrics, heroes and heroines with magical powers, or extraterrestrial beings. • Plots may reflect a heroic battle for the common good (high fantasy) or adventures of real characters in an enchanted setting (light fantasy). • Science fiction relies on hypothesized scientific advancements and raises questions about the future of humanity.	Reading fantasy nurtures the imagination and can help young students come to grips with the differences between reality and truth. For older students, fantasy and science fiction can be useful vehicles for examining issues related to human survival in an uncertain future. Well-written fantasy provides exemplars of well-constructed plots, convincing characterization, universal themes, and evocative language.
4. Realistic fiction	• Content addresses aspects of coping with life (peer relationships, death, identity, family problems, handicapping conditions, courage, survival). • Plots, settings, and characters reflect those found in real life. • Endings are not always happy, but reality is frequently relieved by wit and humor.	Realistic fiction that is honest and authentic evokes feelings of personal identification with the story characters and allows students to discover that their experiences, needs, and emotions are not unique. Realistic fiction can help students gain insight into their own feelings as well as understand the feelings of others. It can also allow students to try on roles and rehearse possible future experiences. Realistic fiction can stimulate discussion and provide "a way in" to other kinds of reading for reluctant readers.
5. Historical fiction	• Stories are grounded in history but not restricted by it. • The historical setting is an authentic	Books and stories of historical fiction can make the past more vivid and interesting to students. They can supplement content-area textbooks at all grade levels,

	and integral part of the story. • Characters' actions, dialogue, beliefs, and values are true to the historical period. • Themes include loyalty, friendship, courage, and the conflict between good and evil.	providing knowledge about the people, beliefs, hardships, and events of a particular historical period. Historical fiction helps students to discover their own heritage as well as to see and judge the events of the past.
6. Mystery	• Tightly woven plots have elements of suspense, danger, or intrigue. • Plots are fast-paced and frequently involve foreshadowing or flashback.	The best mysteries have well-drawn characters and well-structured plots. Students enjoy reading them and can improve their problem-solving skills, reading rate, reading for details, and vocabulary development through this fictional form.
7. Drama	• The plot is carried by the dialogue. • The number of characters is limited. • Description and narration are infrequently used. • Structure is well-defined, with segments clearly divided by acts or scenes. • The play's ending marks the resolution of the conflict.	Plays appeal to young students for their immediacy and brevity. Their use provides clear illustration of story structure, allows for participation by several students at a time, and encourages dramatic interpretation of other genres. For all students, the challenge to *write* a play would underscore the uniqueness of this literary form, in which the plot, theme, and characterization are carried by the dialogue.

NONFICTION

Text	*Distinguishing Features*	*Comments*
1. Informational books and articles	• Information is factual and may be supported by detailed descriptions, examples, definitions, or quotations from authorities. • Mode of presentation may be expository, narrative, or descriptive. • Content may include history and geography, science and nature, hobbies and crafts, experiments, discoveries, and how things work. • Organization follows a logical pattern and may include textual aids (e.g., table of contents, chapter headings, marginal notes). • Illustrations clarify text and add authenticity.	Informational books and articles are excellent resources for reading, writing, or hands-on activities on topics of interest. They are frequently superior to textbooks in that they may provide sharper focus, present more specialized information, or more clearly reveal the author's point of view. They are an effective vehicle for teaching organizational patterns such as cause-effect, comparison-contrast, time order, or sequence. At all levels, informational material provides provocative content for discussion, from how kittens grow to Shakespeare's England.
2. Biography	• Subjects include explorers; political heroes and heroines; and achievers in literature, science, the arts, and other disciplines. • Effectiveness depends on accuracy, authenticity, and an appealing narrative style.	Reading about the achievements of others may help students to see history as the lives and events of real people and to appreciate the contributions of all cultures. For adolescents, biographies may help to increase their own aspirations and provide role models for their own lives. They also serve as a useful vehicle for studying bias, fact vs. opinion, and characterization.

3. Books of true experience	• Content relates to specific episodes or events from a person's life over a limited time span. • Author may be the central figure or an objective narrator.	Books of true experience provide an in-depth look at a contemporary or historical event or a series of related events. Students will broaden their understanding of those events and situations by seeing them in their cultural and historical context as well as by observing the effects of those events on a number of people.
4. Essays, journals, letters, and personal accounts	• Content is based upon or adapted from original documents in diary, letter, or essay form.	Documentary records on such diverse topics as slavery, life in 12th-century England, or songs of the American Revolution provide excellent supplements to historical fiction or resources for creative dramatics.
5. Historical documents and speeches	• Official statements of social and political significance may include information about the author and setting of each document.	Reproductions of original documents help students discover the language and style of early writers as well as provide clues to the lifestyles and attitudes of people in an earlier time. Contemporary speeches may be used as a source of information about political and social issues, as a basis of comparison with the language and concerns of the past, and as a vehicle for the study of persuasion.
6. Newspapers and news magazines	• Writing style is simple and direct. • Current events are reported accurately and objectively. • Organization is based on who, what, when, where, why, how. • Vocabulary is functional. • Content provides something for every student: news, editorials, comics, new discoveries in science, real math problems, etc.	Newspapers and news magazines are adult media, thereby providing motivation for reluctant readers. The best news stories are models of conciseness and clear writing; the best editorials are models for teaching students to write for a particular audience and purpose. Newspapers are practical, flexible, inexpensive supplements to an English language arts curriculum.

POETRY

Text	*Distinguishing Features*	*Comments*
1. Ballad	• Poems give the effect of a song; are told with dramatic flair; usually focus on a single incident; frequently use dialogue, refrain, and repetition. • Content usually deals with heroic deeds, love, tragedy, feuds.	Ballads continue the oral tradition and are an excellent source of material for dramatization.
2. Narrative	• Verses tell a story. • Action is fast; plot develops rapidly and is usually related in chronological order. • Humor is frequently employed.	Story poems are among students' favorite poetic forms. For this reason, they provide an excellent way of capturing students' interest in poetry.

3. Lyric	• Poems are rhythmic and melodic, evoking images and inspiring memorization. • Content is usually personal or descriptive.	Lyric poems are frequently the first poems students want to memorize because of their rhythm, beauty of language, and reflection of a poet's personal response to a topic.
4. Sonnet	• Verses usually contain 14 lines, usually in iambic pentameter, with an elaborate rhyme scheme.	Sonnets are long enough to allow for development of thought, yet they require precision in language and form. For this reason, sonnets provide excellent examples of disciplined use of rhyme, rhythm, and imagery.
5. Free verse	• Poem depends upon rhythm and cadence, rather than rhyme, for its effect.	The lack of rhyme and less predictable meter of free verse make this form a good introduction to the question "What is poetry?" Students are frequently surprised to learn that rhyme is not a requirement of poetry.
6. Patterned poetry		Asking students to write their own patterned poetry encourages word play and challenges them to create rhyme and rhythm in a structured format. Both the reading and the writing of patterned poetry demand discipline. Writing it requires searching for the perfect word to express the desired image. Reading it requires constructing inferences to recreate the poem's meaning. Many students enjoy composing patterned poetry in pairs or teams.
Limerick	• Verses have five lines with first, second, and fifth lines rhyming; third and fourth lines are shorter and rhyme with each other. • Content is usually humorous, with last line ending in a surprise twist.	
Haiku	• Form consists of 17 syllables within 3 lines (5-7-5). • Content relates to mood or feelings evoked by nature or the seasons.	
Cinquain	• Structure may follow a 2-4-6-8-2 syllable pattern or may follow a simpler form using words per line in a 1-2-3-4-1 pattern.	
Diamante	• Structure follows a diamond shape of seven lines, as follows: one noun, two adjectives, three participles, four related nouns or a phrase of four words, three participles, two adjectives, one noun.	
Tanka	• Structure follows a 5-7-5-7-7 syllable pattern.	
7. Concrete poems	• The message of the poem is revealed through the choice and arrangement of words on the page.	Reading and writing concrete poems can help students to appreciate the importance of putting meaning before structure and can aid visual imagery, encourage creative thinking, and make abstract ideas more immediate and tangible. This poetic form is also fun to create at the computer.

EVALUATION OF SKILLS IN READING

In a curriculum in which reading is viewed as an active, strategic search for an author's intended message, evaluation will focus on how the reader derives that meaning and with what degree of success. Teachers should be aware that some students with handicapping conditions may use alternative or nontraditional methods to derive meaning from reading materials. Instructional techniques and materials may need to be modified to allow these students to participate in reading activities.

In a meaning-based curriculum, the evaluation process is guided by several important principles:

- *Evaluation of reading skill should occur in the context of meaningful language experiences.* That is, the reading material itself should be related to the interests of the student, and whenever possible, knowledge of small units of language should be assessed within larger segments of text.
- *The procedures used for evaluation should be related to the purposes for reading.* For example, evaluation of reading for information might assess a student's use or application of that knowledge, while evaluation of reading for enjoyment might include a count of books voluntarily selected from the reading corner.
- *Evaluation should be ongoing, occurring continuously and simultaneously with daily reading experiences.* Only by observing students as they read can teachers properly assess the processes students use to derive meaning and appreciation from text.
- *The results of evaluation will have meaning only if they are used as a basis for subsequent planning.* Even program evaluation should be done to improve or modify instruction, either for the current group of students or for subsequent groups.

For English language arts teachers, evaluation primarily answers two questions: "How well does the student read?" and "What are some informal means of evaluating growth or change?" The following suggestions can guide teachers to be effective observers of student readers.

How Well Does the Student Read?

The answer to the question of reading competence depends first on whether the student is a beginning or a developing reader.

For *beginning readers,* readiness for reading can be assessed through sensitive observation and begins with the student's responses to books. Does the student:

- bring books from home or the library to share
- select book activities when given a choice
- hold and handle books appropriately
- remain attentive during story reading
- refer to book characters, plots, or language patterns in conversation?

Negative responses to these questions may indicate a need for more planned encounters with books in the classroom. If responses are in the affirmative, students are ready to build on this knowledge and discover the special language of books. Teachers may observe students to see if they:

- see relationships between texts and pictures
- expect text and pictures to make sense
- know that print can be translated into speech
- know that English is read from left to right and from top to bottom
- know where the story begins and ends
- recognize words and letters as concepts.

At this level, the key question is "What does the child know about books and about reading?" The answers cannot be acquired from scores on tests of visual perception, auditory discrimination, and sensorimotor abilities. Assessment of readiness for reading can best be done by observing children's encounters with written language.

To assess the competence of *developing readers,* teachers should consider:

1. the types of errors students make when they read aloud;
2. the strategic behaviors students use before, during, and after reading;
3. the results of students' efforts to comprehend the material.

1. Oral Reading Errors

One important outcome of effective observation is a qualitative view of errors. That is, errors are seen as a source of information about the language patterns and past experiences the reader brings to the text, rather

than as signs of unsuccessful learning. Sensitive observers will look for error patterns and will not draw conclusions based on a single sample of reading. They will be alert to ways students respond to the differences between content-area and narrative material. They will also recognize that every error does not suggest a need for immediate correction or a need for teaching a new skill. At the same time, information gleaned from error analysis should be used in planning for future instruction. When assessing oral reading, the teacher should ask:

- What are the reader's strategies for identifying unknown words (e.g., looks at teacher, sounds out letter by letter, sounds out syllable by syllable, skips words and reads on, substitutes a nonword, substitutes a synonym)?
- When identifying unknown words, does the reader consistently use one cue system at the expense of another? For example, some errors have a high degree of graphic similarity to the text but a low degree of sound similarity (*away* for *any*). Some errors will be grammatically similar to the text but semantically dissimilar ("Joe held the string of *beds* up to the light.").
- What are the reader's behaviors regarding rate, fluency, and phrasing (e.g., does he or she read word by word, make many hesitations, stop at inappropriate places, skip punctuation, lose place in the text)?

In answering these questions, the teacher should keep in mind that errors frequently indicate a search for strategy. Repetitions may suggest attempts on the part of the reader to make sense. On the other hand, the use of nonsense word substitutions may indicate a failure to appreciate that reading should make sense.

2. *Strategic Behaviors*

As students develop greater independence in reading, their strategies for coping with difficult text should improve. They should recognize the differences between narrative and content-area materials and should respond appropriately. The observant teacher will note students' ability to:

- predict content, key words, and organizational patterns of content-area text
- pose questions to be answered by the reading
- apply corrective strategies when comprehension fails
- determine meanings of unfamiliar words or concepts
- retell, summarize, or paraphrase the material
- relate the new information or ideas to information or ideas previously acquired.

In assessing students' behavior, the key question is "To what degree are the students in control of their own learning?" Activities for helping students achieve independence in reading are suggested in *Reading and Literature in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12*.

3. *Comprehension*

In a comprehension-centered curriculum, students are taught to retell information, to respond to questions that go beyond mere recall of facts, to clarify or justify an initial response, and to develop written analyses and interpretations. In assessing students' ability to accomplish these tasks, the following questions may guide teachers' observations:

- When retelling stories, can students:
  - recall the characters and their distinguishing features?
  - recall significant events and their sequence?
  - state what the story was about (plot) in a few words?
  - tell why they think the author might have wanted to write the story (theme)?
  - effectively explain why they liked or did not like the story?
- When responding to specific questions, can students:
  - translate meanings and ideas in their own words?
  - interpret relationships and events?
  - apply the information or ideas to a new situation?
  - analyze particular statements or implications?
  - synthesize by providing a summary, main idea, or theme statement?
- When responding to probing questions that require students to clarify or justify an initial answer, can they:
  - rephrase, define, or elaborate upon particular information or ideas?
  - provide reasons, with reference to the text, for their thinking?
  - tie their responses to related issues?
  - consider alternative points of view?
- When writing about their reading, are students able to:
  - relate their personal experience and background to the text?

- use the title, opening paragraph, provocative passage, or chapter headings to raise questions that are likely to lead to interpretation of the text?
- reflect on the ways in which the author uses language and text characteristics to evoke a response in the reader?
- produce their own substantiated interpretation of the text?

The question "How well does the student read?" cannot be entirely answered by standardized tests or grade-level scores. These measures are helpful for determining the range of individual differences within a class or for providing statistical measures of achievement. They do not, however, provide a qualitative look at the students' ability to handle day-to-day encounters with a variety of texts. Nor do they give insight to the reasons behind students' responses. The questions posed in this section may serve as useful supplements to results from informal reading inventories, the Degrees of Reading Power tests, the Regents Comprehensive Examination in English, or standardized reading survey tests.

Monitoring Growth and Change

Any procedure used to determine how well a student reads may, of course, be used to assess progress. In addition, there are a number of vehicles for strengthening the evaluation process, including affective measures, conferences, and self-evaluation.

1. Affective Measures

Teachers would probably not insist that their students like everything they read, but certainly a love of reading is one of the hoped-for outcomes of every reading curriculum. Enjoyment, appreciation, refuge, solace, insight, and self-discovery are but a few of the dimensions that comprise what Rosenblatt (1949) calls "the literary experience" and what psychologists call "the affective domain." A Likert scale, when completed by the students at the beginning and end of the year, may be helpful for measuring students' changes in attitude toward reading. This is simply a list of declarative statements (e.g., "I would rather read than watch television"), each of which is followed by five to seven numbered responses, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Alternatively, students may be asked to complete sentence starters such as "When I have read, I. . ." or "For me, studying. . ."

Of course, the best measure of growth in reading is a positive change in reading habits. To assess such changes, teachers should ask:

- Are my students reading a greater range and quality of literature?
- Are my students turning to books as a source of both information and pleasure?
- Are my students responding to their reading with greater depth of understanding?
- Are my students' insights from literature reflected in their play, talk, art, or writing?

2. Conferences

Teacher-student conferences can be very useful in observing growth or change. They should be as brief and as frequent as possible, serving to keep in touch with the student and not to administer discipline or discuss a grade. Besides helping teachers make an initial assessment of reading ability, conferences may be used to:

- review charts of books read, words learned, strategies attempted or mastered, new words used in writing or speaking
- listen to oral reading and note approaches to word identification, patterns of errors, fluency, and expression
- discuss reactions to a book or selection
- determine readiness for a given task
- explore interests and direction related to a subsequent interdisciplinary project
- probe responses to a test (such as the Degrees of Reading Power tests) for the reasons behind the responses
- observe and discuss study strategies
- provide opportunities for students to assess their own progress
- provide opportunities for students with handicapping conditions to discuss their own needs for modified classroom materials, environments, or teaching strategies.

3. Self-evaluation

No matter what the test results, growth is not really growth unless students are able to see the results of their own progress. Self-evaluation can occur through use of checklists, progress charts, contracts, questionnaires, or conferences. Whatever the medium, some questions students might ask themselves are:

- Am I seeing literature as a source of lifelong pleasure?
- What books have I read, and how many different categories do they represent?
- What corrective strategies have I learned to use when reading difficult text?
- What new strategies for comprehending or studying do I use?

- How have I shown improvement in the content areas as a result of my improvement in reading?
- What reading problems do I need to work on?

Whether progress is assessed through affective measures, conferences, or self-evaluation, it is important that observations be documented. Anecdotal records, student comments, samples of work, and observational notes all furnish a context for analyzing and interpreting formal evaluation data. In addition, they provide clues to the reading process in meaningful situations.

Finally, evaluation in a meaning-centered program must focus on the success with which students are learning to direct, control, and use their reading experiences. The criteria for evaluating that learning should stem from the curriculum objectives. The focus skills listed in the "Chart of Expectations for Student Readers K-12" on pages 67-72 can be used as indicators of success. The "Characteristics of an Effective English Language Arts Curriculum K-12" on pages 11-16 should also be helpful in assessment.

Suggestions for Program Evaluators

There are a number of ways administrators and curriculum evaluators determine the degree to which the characteristics are evidenced and the instructional objectives achieved. Some of these are:

- Interview several students about their reading progress; use a variation of the questions found on pages 80-81 (e.g., "What new study strategies are you using?").
- Observe classrooms to determine students' reading behaviors, attitudes, and responses.
- Examine lesson plans for the amount and variety of reading experiences, consistency and continuity of lessons, and the extent to which purposes, objectives, and focus skills are being addressed.
- Consult content teachers to determine if students are becoming more effective at reading and learning from text.
- Consult special education teachers regarding the progress of students with handicapping conditions who have been appropriately placed in the regular language arts classes.
- Review students' folders for indications of their interests, needs, and progress.
- Interview librarians to determine any changes in the number and variety of books taken from the library.
- Note patterns of response to reading-incentive programs (Parents as Reading Partners, MS Read-a-Thon, Book-It), especially numbers, grade levels, and ability levels of students involved.

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Appendix A
REGENTS GOALS FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS – 1984

The two paragraphs below are excerpted from the 1984 Statement of Regents Goals. The accompanying grid indicates the Regents Goals and the various strands within the K-12 Language Arts Curriculum in which they are addressed.

The Regents Statement of Goals for students includes skills and characteristics that each student should acquire through education, the responsibility for which is shared by the family, schools, and other organizations in each community. The Regents Goals can be realized only through a concerted effort by all of these components. The Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results in New York focuses on the actions *schools* can and must take to help students meet these goals.

The specific goals that follow are all in terms of expectations for students. They start with a first priority on language – the capability to communicate that underpins all the rest of learning. These goals are, in turn, translated in this Plan to courses, subjects, disciplines, and methods of inquiry for examining the world. Taken together, the goals represent judgments or choices for the meaning of a total elementary and secondary education.

	Composition	List/Spkg	Rdg/Lit
1. Each student will master communication and computation skills as a foundation to:			
1.1 Think logically and creatively.	X	X	X
1.2 Apply reasoning skills to issues and problems.	X	X	X
1.3 Comprehend written, spoken, and visual presentations in various media.	X	X	X
1.4 Speak, listen to, read, and write clearly and effectively in English.	X	X	X
1.5 Perform basic mathematical calculations.			
1.6 Speak, listen to, read, and write at least one language other than English.			
1.7 Use current and developing technologies for academic and occupational pursuits.	X	X	X
1.8 Determine what information is needed for particular purposes and be able to acquire, organize, and use that information for those purposes.	X	X	X
2. Each student will learn methods of inquiry and knowledge gained through the following disciplines and use the methods and knowledge in interdisciplinary applications:			
2.1 English language and literature.	X	X	X
2.2 History and social science.			
2.3 Mathematics.			
2.4 Natural sciences and technology.			
2.5 Language and literature in at least one language other than English.			

	Composition	List/Spkg	Rdg/Lit
3. Each student will acquire knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the artistic, cultural, and intellectual accomplishments of civilization and develop the skills to express personal artistic talents. Areas include:			
3.1 Ways to develop knowledge and appreciation of the arts.	X	X	X
3.2 Aesthetic judgments and the ability to apply them to works of art.	X	X	X
3.3 Ability to use cultural resources of museums, libraries, theaters, historic sites, and performing arts groups.	X	X	X
3.4 Ability to produce or perform works in at least one major art form.	X	X	X
3.5 Materials, media, and history of major art forms.			
3.6 Understanding of the diversity of cultural heritages.		X	X
4. Each student will acquire knowledge about political, economic, and social institutions and procedures in this country and other countries. Included are:			
4.1 Knowledge of American political, economic, and social processes and policies at national, State, and local levels.			
4.2 Knowledge of political, economic, and social institutions and procedures in various nations; ability to compare the operation of such institutions; and understanding of the international interdependence of political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental systems.			
5. Each student will respect and practice basic civic values and acquire the skills, knowledge, understanding, and attitudes necessary to participate in democratic self-government. Included are:			
5.1 Understanding and acceptance of the values of justice, honesty, self-discipline, due process, equality, and majority rule with respect for minority rights.	X	X	X
5.2 Respect for self, others, and property as integral to a self-governing, democratic society.			
5.3 Ability to apply reasoning skills and the process of democratic government to resolve societal problems and disputes.			
6. Each student will develop the ability to understand and respect people of different race; sex; ability; cultural heritage; national origin; religion; and political, economic, and social background, and their values, beliefs and attitudes.	X	X	X
7. Each student will acquire knowledge of the ecological consequences of choices in the use of the environment and natural resources.			
8. Each student will develop general career skills, attitudes, and work habits and make a self-assessment of career prospects. Students not directly pursuing postsecondary education will acquire entry-level employment skills.			

	Composition	List/Spkg	Rdg/Lit
9. Each student will learn knowledge, skills, and attitudes which enable development of:			
9.1 Self-esteem.	X	X	X
9.2 The ability to maintain physical, mental, and emotional health.			
9.3 Understanding of the ill effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.			
10. Each student will develop a commitment to lifetime learning with the capacity for undertaking new studies, synthesizing new knowledge and experience with the known, and refining the ability to judge.	X	X	X

Appendix B
RELATIONSHIP OF REGENTS GOALS TO OVERARCHING OBJECTIVES

The New York State English Language Arts Curriculum is based on four overarching objectives. For each objective, the specific Regents Goals for Elementary and Secondary Schools (1984) related to that objective are listed.

I. STUDENTS LEARN TO USE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TO GAIN INFORMATION, DISCOVER MEANING, UNDERSTAND LOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS, AND MAKE JUDGMENTS THROUGH CRITICAL LISTENING, READING, AND VIEWING.

- 1.3 Comprehend written, spoken, and visual presentations in various media.
- 1.8 Determine what information is needed for particular purposes and be able to acquire, organize, and use that information for those purposes.

II. STUDENTS LEARN TO USE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TO SPEAK, WRITE, AND SOLVE PROBLEMS CREATIVELY.

- 1.1 Think logically and creatively.
- 1.2 Apply reasoning skills to issues and problems.
- 1.7 Use current and developing technologies for academic and occupational pursuits.

III. STUDENTS LEARN TO USE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TO COMMUNICATE EMOTIONS, IDEAS, OPINIONS, VALUES, EXPERIENCES, AND INFORMATION.

- 1.4 Speak, listen to, read, and write clearly and effectively in English.
- 3.3 Ability to use cultural resources of museums, libraries, theaters, historic sites, and performing arts groups.
- 3.4 Ability to produce or perform works in at least one major art form.
- 5.1 Understanding and acceptance of the values of justice, honesty, self-discipline, due process, equality, and majority rule with respect for minority rights.
- 9.1 Self-esteem.

IV. STUDENTS LEARN TO USE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TO DISCOVER BOTH THE POWER AND THE BEAUTY OF LITERATURE AS A MIRROR OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE, REFLECTING HUMAN MOTIVES, CONFLICTS, VALUES, AND TRADITIONS.

- 2. Each student will learn methods of inquiry and knowledge gained through the following disciplines and use the methods and knowledge in interdisciplinary applications.
- 3.1 . . .develop knowledge and appreciation of the arts.
- 3.2 (Express) aesthetic judgments and the ability to apply them to works of art.
- 3.6 (Demonstrate) understanding of the diversity of cultural heritages.
- 6. Each student will develop the ability to understand and respect people of different race; sex; ability; cultural heritage; national origin; religion; and political, economic, and social background, and their values, beliefs and attitudes.
- 10. Each student will develop a commitment to lifetime learning with the capacity for undertaking new studies, synthesizing new knowledge and experience with the known, and refining the ability to judge.

Appendix C
GUIDELINES FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL KEYBOARDING INSTRUCTION

The 1984 Board of Regents Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results in New York includes the following statement: "Instruction in keyboarding will be included in the State-developed English Language Arts Syllabus."

The following general guidelines are important to consider in providing efficient, effective keyboarding instruction.

- Keyboarding instruction shall be integrated into the elementary language arts program as an enabling skill for manipulating data and ideas, thus allowing students to discover, record, arrange, and communicate information in a way never before possible.
- Students shall be provided instruction in basic keyboarding techniques at the grade level in which they are first expected to use electronic keyboards in learning situations requiring efficient input, retrieval, and manipulation of words, symbols, and data.
- Because of the large number of symbols and command functions available on electronic keyboards, instruction should focus on correct fingering techniques from home-row locations, with emphasis on accuracy rather than speed.
- Sequential and cumulative introduction of new keys with opportunities for practice and application are essential for students to learn effective keyboarding fundamentals.
- Brief, frequent, scheduled instruction is more beneficial than random, sporadic, and lengthy practice sessions.
- Keyboards (electric typewriters or computers) should be readily available for students to use independently for practice and application of new skills they learn during instructional time.
- Furniture and equipment should be adjustable to accommodate a range of pupil sizes so that students may comfortably attain proper body position and posture for effective operation of keyboards.
- Instructional materials such as texts, charts, and software should be appropriate for the developmental level of pupils for whom they are intended and for the objectives of the program.
- In order for student learning to be most effective, it is important that elementary classroom teachers have adequate training in the instructional goals, objectives, and methodology of keyboarding instruction.
- Teachers responsible for keyboarding instruction should be familiar with the strengths and limitations of instructional support materials and their appropriate use in elementary keyboarding instruction.
- Business education teachers should be called upon to assist in the development of keyboarding curricula, in-service training, and selection of materials and methodology.
- Keyboarding may be the primary means of written communication for some students with handicapping conditions. Adaptive peripherals may be required for some students to access the keyboard and computer (e.g., special monitors, special input devices). Students may also need adapted furniture in order to access the keyboard (e.g., special seating, slant board, larger desks).

Appendix D
EVALUATING LANGUAGE ARTS SOFTWARE*

General Criteria

- Does this software encourage active processing on the part of the student?
- Will this software complement the course of study?
- Will this software save time, make a hard job easier, serve more students?
- Does this software provide adequate reinforcement via color, graphics, sound, quality text?
- Is this software adaptable for more than one purpose?
- Is this software teacher-accessible, and does it allow programmatic alterations (e.g., speed, letter size)?
- Is this software a good model of what it does?
- Can this software receive commands through a variety of special input peripherals (e.g., single-switch control)?

Specific Criteria

In addition to meeting the above criteria for relevance, appropriateness, and skillful use of technology, language arts software should reflect current theories of language development, reading, writing, and thinking. In particular, software used for *writing instruction* should:

- reflect an understanding of writing as a process of communication, as well as a way to discover and activate ideas;
- help students generate ideas for writing, select and arrange those ideas, find appropriate modes for expressing them, and revise and edit the written product;
- help students recognize that precision in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and other manuscript conventions is a part of the total effectiveness of writing.

Software used for *reading instruction* should:

- help students learn from the very beginning to approach reading as a search for meaning;
- help develop the necessary reading skills to comprehend connected text in a variety of forms;
- demonstrate that reading functions as a pleasurable activity as well as a means of acquiring knowledge;
- help students to read accurately and make valid inferences;
- elicit personal and/or critical responses to literature;
- provide students with strategies for organizing, responding to, or clarifying textual information, rather than merely serving as a vehicle for displaying that information.

Software used for *language instruction* should:

- help students recognize language as a powerful tool for thinking and learning;
- demonstrate how topic, purpose, and audience influence the structure and use of language;
- help students learn how the English language has developed, continues to change, and survives because it is adaptable to new times;
- provide opportunities for using language beyond the letter, word, and sentence levels;
- illustrate the ways in which grammar represents the orderliness of language and makes meaningful communication possible.

Software designed to promote *thinking skills* should:

- help students analyze, classify, compare, formulate hypotheses, make inferences, and draw conclusions;
- promote creative thinking by providing opportunities to bring fresh perceptions to familiar ideas;
- encourage logical thinking by providing opportunities for constructing arguments, detecting fallacies in reasoning, and testing the validity of an assertion by examining the evidence;
- foster critical thinking by requiring students to ask questions, discriminate between fact and opinion, and evaluate the intentions and messages of speakers and writers.

*Adapted from "Essentials of English," published by the National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, IL.

Appendix E
STUDENTS WITH HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS

The Board of Regents, through revising the Part 100 Regulations of the Commissioner and the Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results in New York, has made a strong commitment to integrating the education of students with handicapping conditions into the total school program. According to Section 100.2(s), "Each student with a handicapping condition, as such term is defined in Section 200.1(ii) of this Chapter, shall have access to the full range of programs and services set forth in this Part to the extent that such programs and services are appropriate to such student's special educational needs." Districts must have policies and procedures in place to make sure that students with handicapping conditions have equal opportunities to access diploma credits, courses, and requirements.

The majority of students with disabilities have the intellectual potential to master the curriculum content requirements for a high school diploma. Most students who require special education attend regular education classes in conjunction with receiving specialized instruction and/or related services. These students must attain the same academic standards as their nonhandicapped peers in order to meet these requirements. For this reason, it is very important that at all grade levels students with handicapping conditions receive instruction in the same content areas so as to receive the same informational base required for proficiency on statewide testing programs and diploma requirements.

The teacher providing instruction through this syllabus/ curriculum has the opportunity to provide an educational setting that will enable the students to explore their abilities and interests. Instruction could be provided to handicapped students either by teachers certified in this subject area or by special education teachers. Teachers certified in this subject area would be providing instruction to handicapped students who are recommended by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) as being able to benefit from instruction in a regular educational setting and who are appropriately placed in this setting. Special education teachers may also provide this instruction to a class of students with handicapping conditions in a special class setting.

Teachers certified in the subject area should become aware of the needs of those students with handicapping conditions participating in their classes. Instructional techniques and materials must be modified to the extent appropriate to provide students with handicapping conditions the opportunity to meet diploma requirements. Information or assistance is available through special education teachers, administrators, the Committee on Special Education, or a student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP).

Alternative Testing Techniques

Another consideration in assisting students with handicapping conditions to meet the requirements of regular education is the use of alternative testing techniques. Alternative testing techniques are modifications of testing procedures or formats which provide students with handicapping conditions equal opportunity to participate in testing situations. Such techniques provide the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of skills and attainment of knowledge without being limited or unfairly restricted by the existence of a handicapping condition.

The Committee on Special Education (CSE) is responsible for identifying and documenting a student's need for alternative testing techniques. This determination is made when a student is initially referred to CSE, is reviewed annually for as long as the student receives special education services, and is reviewed when the student is determined to no longer need special education services. **The modifications are to be used consistently throughout the student's educational program.** Principals ensure that students who have been identified by CSE as educationally handicapped are provided the alternative testing techniques recommended by CSE and approved by the board of education.

Alternative testing techniques which have been specified on student IEPs for use by a student must be used consistently in both special and regular education settings. Regular classroom teachers should be aware of possible alternative testing techniques and should be skilled in their implementation.

The coordination and cooperation of the total school program will assist in providing the opportunity for a greater number of handicapped students to meet the requirements needed to pursue a high school diploma. The integrated provision of regular education programs, special education programs, remediation, alternative testing techniques, modified teacher techniques and materials, and access to credit through alternatives will assist in enabling such students to pursue high school diplomas to a greater degree. The teacher who provides instruction

through this curriculum has a unique opportunity to assist such students in their individual goals.

Additional information on alternative testing modifications is available in the manual entitled *Alternative Techniques for Students with Handicapping Conditions*, which can be obtained from:

New York State Education Department
Office for Education of Children with
Handicapping Conditions
Room 1071 Education Building Annex
Albany, NY 12234

Infusing Awareness of Persons with Disabilities through Curriculum

In keeping with the concept of integration, the following subgoal of the Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results in New York was established:

In all subject areas, revisions in the syllabi will include materials and activities related to generic subgoals such as problem solving, reasoning skills, speaking, capacity to search for information, the use of libraries, and increasing student awareness of and *information about the disabled*.

The purpose of this subgoal is to ensure that appropriate activities and materials are available to increase student awareness of disabilities and issues in regard to disabilities.

This curriculum, by design, includes information, activities and materials regarding persons with handicapping conditions. Teachers are encouraged to include other examples as may be appropriate to their classrooms or the situation at hand. Teachers are also encouraged to assess the classroom environment to determine how the environment may contribute to student awareness of persons with disabilities.

Appendix F
PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATED UNIT OF STUDY

1. Decide on the organizing principle for the unit (topic, concept, genre, skill, project).
2. List the major understandings to be addressed. (These should be written as key *ideas*, not just key *words*.)
3. Select appropriate literature, to include both long and short works from a variety of genres.
4. List related language concepts to be addressed in the unit.
5. List activities that will support the major understandings and language concepts. Include reading, writing, listening, and speaking where appropriate. Consider activities that will unite the whole group of students, some that can be individualized, and some that will include student planning and direction. (Use purposes and objectives from syllabus to guide you in the selection of activities.)
6. List activities in appropriate sequence.
7. List related resources.
8. Prepare a graphic organizer (e.g., a web or structured overview) that describes your integrated unit of study.

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